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## THEY WERE GREAT AMERICANS

TWENTY-EIGHT HISTORIC AMERICANS  
AS SEEN BY TWENTY-EIGHT CONTEM-  
PORARY AMERICANS, INCLUDING  
ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT, CARL  
SANDBERG, AND OTHERS.

"Any great American," said Benjamin Franklin, "is one of America's national resources." And, obeying the exhortation in *Ecclesiasticus*, twenty-eight contemporaries write the biographies of twenty-eight great men and women of America's past. Men who worked, fought and died that America might live, men who dedicated their lives to building a nation imbued with the principles of peace and democracy, who worked on the battlefield, in the direction of government, in the interests of the rights of man.

This book will help towards a closer understanding and knowledge between the Anglo-Saxon nations. Such understanding and knowledge are vital to the future of the whole world, because now and in the future the Anglo-Saxon nations have a vital part to play in preserving and shaping the principles of liberty and democracy which have been their life blood.



# THEY WERE GREAT AMERICANS

*Twenty-eight Historic Americans*  
*as seen by*  
*Twenty-eight Contemporary Americans*

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
VISCOUNT HALIFAX, K.G., P.C.

AND A PREFACE BY  
HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.

Illustrated by

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**THERE WERE GIANTS IN THE LAND**

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## INTRODUCTION

By VISCOUNT HALIFAX, K.G., P.C.

ONE effect of the war has been greatly to increase the interest which the people of Great Britain and the United States now take in each other.

This collection of twenty-eight short studies of famous Americans of the past by twenty-eight American writers of contemporary fame, will nourish the desire of English readers to learn more about their great fellow democracy across the Atlantic.

Historical knowledge is no mere luxury to-day, but of all necessities the most vital. The more the nations of the world know of each other's past the better will they understand each other's present, and the future role which each may play.

Knowledge of any nation is incomplete if nothing, or little, is known of those who have contributed to its national heritage. You cannot know the mind of a people unless you know something of its heroes—by which term I mean not merely its great captains, but all those men and women whose memory illumines the ideals by which a great people lives.

The collection presented in this volume constitutes a parade of great Americans from the time of Roger Williams who founded Rhode Island in the seventeenth century, to Associate Justice Benjamin Cardozo who died in 1938.

Only twenty-eight names are here. Many great



Americans who helped build their country in the field of Science, Industry and Invention have been set aside to make room for others who have contributed to the spiritual life of the nation. The influence of men such as Thomas Edison or Wilbur Wright can be seen every day and in every country. The importance of men such as Walt Whitman, or Cardinal Gibbons, is less easily understood even in the United States itself.

Some of the names will be well known to English readers—George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, and Theodore Roosevelt. Other names will be familiar but will be little more than names, such as that of Julia Ward Howe, author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Others may be almost unknown. Few, probably, have heard of Frederick Douglass, who was born a negro slave but rose to serve his country as its Minister in Haiti.

When one of America's best known biographers, Carl Sandburg, the author of a life of Abraham Lincoln which has already become a classic, was asked to contribute to this collection he agreed with the words "This country has been good to me." The United States has indeed been good to Americans whether native born or like Carl Schurz, immigrants from Europe. Americans know it, and are eager to repay their debt to America. In these pages they will find new strength to bear the sacrifices they know to be necessary for America's salvation. And we may here gain insight into the great traditions that inspire the people of the United States.

HALIFAX.

IN THESE COLLECTED ESSAYS, WRITTEN AT THE suggestion of the Treasury Department, twenty-eight writers of contemporary fame pay tribute to an equal number of the giants in our past.

To each of the men and women described in these pages there came a time of crisis, a moment for brave and bold decision. We at the Treasury felt that it would help the American people to meet the supreme crisis of this generation if they were reminded of the courage, ingenuity and sacrifice with which the leaders of other generations met theirs.

Accordingly, the writing of these articles was more than a mere salute to individual greatness. It was rather an attempt to interpret the lives of great Americans in terms that would enlarge our understanding of the challenge we face today. It was an attempt to help our own people and our friends in other lands to appreciate the pioneer traditions of present-day America.

The fountain of courage today is in our beliefs, our democratic faith. And these patriots of other days were the men and women who fashioned our faith for us—on the battlefield, in libraries and laboratories, in the halls of government, and always in the interest of the rights of man.

I am happy that these articles have been made permanent in book form, and I believe that their authors have, in a very real sense, performed a service for their country.

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DANIEL WEBSTER

# Daniel Webster

1782-1852

by

Stephen Vincent Benét



ANUARY 26, 1830, WAS A BIG DAY IN the United States Senate. We believed then, as we believe now, in thrashing issues out in public, not in settling them behind closed doors—and a very big issue indeed was before the nation. In the space of a man's lifetime, we had grown from a loose confederation of squabbling colonies to a Union of sovereign states. But how sovereign were these states? Was the Union more important than the states or were the states more important than the Union? Could a state refuse to obey laws passed by the federal government for the general good? Was a man an American first and a Virginian or a New Hampshireman second, or was it the other way around? The country was split and divided on the question.

Senator Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina had spoken, and spoken well for his side of the argument. A proud man, from a proud and gallant state, he asserted the rights of his state. South Carolina could nullify federal laws if she chose, withdraw from the Union itself if she chose. Now, for the second time in the great debate, a swarthy, burning-eyed man—"Black Daniel" of Massachusetts—Daniel Webster—rose to reply.

"I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor in the affairs of this government whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union may be best preserved but how tolerable might be the condition of its people when it is broken and destroyed . . ."

The great voice rose and fell—the packed audience in the Senate Chamber listened.

"No such miserable interrogatory as 'What is all this worth?' . . . but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light . . . Liberty *and* Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!"

The last sentence came down like the crash of a breaker. And, when the applause was over, Daniel



Webster went home to his house, for he was tired. But his words about the Union were to go all over the Union. They were to go out to the Indiana frontier and touch the mind of a youngster named Abraham Lincoln. They were to make the United States seem worth living for, and dying for, to hundreds and thousands of men whom Webster never even saw. They were to be among the great words that have made and sustained this nation. And they are an answer still to all the divided and fainthearted who look around them and quaver "What is all this worth?"

So what sort of man was it who said these words? Did he know his country and his people—did he know what he was talking about?

He was farmer, orator, fisherman, lawyer, statesman. He was a frail boy who grew into a strong man. "This is our Yankee Englishman; such limbs we make in Yankee land." Born on a New Hampshire farm of hard-bitten, resolute stock, educated at Phillips Exeter Academy and Dartmouth College, he was in the House of Representatives at thirty-one, and, till he died at seventy, he was one of the great men of the country. He was the greatest orator of his day, one of the greatest lawyers of his day. He was secretary of state—he was everything but president—and a bigger man than many presidents. But that does not say enough.

First, last, and all the time, Daniel Webster was a good neighbor. And that wasn't a political pose—it was in his blood. He liked growing things and raising things and helping other people grow them and raise

them. Nobody who came to him in trouble went empty-handed away. On his big farm at Marshfield, Massachusetts, he raised fine sheep and fine cattle and fine horses. He had a ram named Goliath, a Hungarian bull named King Stephen—and he used to say that there was a lot more sense in King Stephen's off hoof than there was in the heads of some United States senators. When his favorite horses died, he had them buried standing up, with their shoes still on, because he thought that did them honor. But the big farm had been poor land when he first got it—he nursed it along and improved it till it got to be a place that people came to see. He'd get up before daybreak to talk and plan and argue with his hired men—and he didn't think of them as anything but men just because they were hired. If anyone had tried to say that he belonged to one class because he made money and the hired men to another because they worked for wages, that man would have got a beautiful dressing-down from Daniel Webster.

So he became to his neighbors, and to New England, the good giant, the man you could count on, the famous orator who was never too busy to help out a neighbor, the man whose voice could roll out like thunder over Monadnock but the human man who liked Medford rum and good living, the man who could whip a trout stream or an enemy with equal skill. They talked about his fishing rod, Old Killall, and his shotgun, Wilmot Proviso—and when he walked into the depot, to take the train for Washing-

ton, everybody in the depot stood up. It takes a good deal to make New Englanders stand up, but they did it for Daniel Webster. They don't do it for many people now.

He had reverses and troubles. He spent money as freely as he made it. He used to say that good lawyers "lived well, worked hard, and died poor." He wanted sons to carry on his name, but his sons died. He never attained the greatest ambition of his life—smaller men, Polk, Tyler, Fillmore, were made president and he was not. But reverses and troubles could not break him. His last great speech, the Seventh of March speech supporting Henry Clay's compromise, was bitterly attacked by his own people of New England—they thought he was trying to compromise with slavery when what he was trying to do was to seek for a peaceful solution of the differences between North and South. But that did not break him either—he had always put the Union first, even above New England, and he said what he thought was right. When he died, in 1852, New England felt differently. They knew a great oak was down. "A mournful voice went up from every house, 'The pride of our nation has fallen—our great neighbour and townsman is no more.'" And that would have satisfied Daniel—to be talked of as neighbor and townsman, not just as a great man.

What did he do, through his long busy fighting life, so crowded with fame and action, with law cases and treaties, country neighbors and foreign ambassadors, orations that men still read, and fishing in Plym-

outh Bay? He did one central thing. He set up and affirmed in men's minds the idea of the United States, not just as a haphazard, temporary league or a partnership between states to be dissolved at their convenience, but as an entity, a deep reality, a living thing that deserved and must have the deepest devotion of every American. He looked beyond his time to do that, he looked beyond his section and the place where he was born. We take that idea for granted, now—we would not take it for granted if men like Webster had not lived for it and fought for it. But with Union must go liberty, forever and ever; with Union must go good-neighborliness and humanity. Webster knew that if men wanted a great, free nation they had to work for it and pay for it and get behind it, just as he and his neighbors at Marshfield worked to make their poor ground into good ground. And that is why his great speeches are still remembered—and the memory of the man with a mouth like a mastiff, a voice like thunder, and eyes like burning anthracite still haunts the New England seacoast and the New Hampshire hills.



# Theodore Roosevelt

1858-1919

by

Julian Street

IN THE EARLY YEARS OF WORLD WAR I, WHEN GERMAN aggressions against the United States were piling up, and we were trying to talk our way out of trouble instead of meeting strength with strength, I was one of a little group of men who used to go for stimulus and comfort to Theodore Roosevelt.

"Let's go to Oyster Bay and take a treatment," we would say when we felt sunk, and always when we had been with the old, tawny lion of Sagamore Hill

for a little while, his courage and vitality would flow into us and we would light up with the holy fire.

The man who had been the youngest and most versatile of American presidents was then a private citizen without party backing, but as always he was the leader of a spirited element in the nation. Up and down the land he went, preaching straight Americanism and the old heroic virtues without which no nation can be great. But the nation was slow to hear.

He spoke to me of that.

"The average man," he said, "does not want to be disturbed. He doesn't want to be called upon to leave his business and his family and do a distinctly unpleasant duty. That is natural enough. Nevertheless, you can appeal to the two soul sides of that man. If you appeal to his deepest sense of duty, to all that he has of strength and courage and high-mindedness, you can make him shake off his sloth, his self-indulgence, his shortsightedness, or his timidity, and stand up and do and dare and die at need, just as the men of Bunker Hill and Trenton and Yorktown and Gettysburg and Shiloh did and dared and died."

Love of country was the predominant passion of Theodore Roosevelt's life. It was he who first perceived this nation's larger destiny and led us toward it. We must be strong. He advocated universal military training for young men for national safety, discipline, and health. He founded the modern American Navy, and having done so was not content to see it rust. When Europe was slow to recognize our increased

stature Roosevelt compelled attention to it. With territorial aspirations, Germany sent a squadron to Venezuela, but Roosevelt reasserted the Monroe Doctrine and backed it with the fleet. So that the navy could be switched quickly from ocean to ocean he built the Panama Canal. To advertise American power he sent a fleet of sixteen battleships around the world. The first "courtesy call" made by this fleet was on truculent Japan, and the effect upon Japan was salutary. "Perdicaris alive or Raisouli dead" was his formula when an American citizen was held for ransom by a Moroccan brigand, and Mr. Perdicaris was quickly set free.

In 1905 he wrote his English friend Cecil Spring-Rice: "My object is to keep America in trim so that fighting her shall be too expensive and dangerous a task lightly to be undertaken by anybody."

Stupid people used to call him bloodthirsty and say he wanted war, when what he wanted was strength to avoid war. Long before 1917 he was considering an organization of nations for peace. "We must strive for peace always," he said, "but we must never hesitate to put righteousness above peace . . . National righteousness without force back of it speedily becomes a matter of derision."

His statesmanlike foresight continues to be revealed. Innumerable instances might be cited, but I select as an example the fact that in the fall of 1914 he said that if Germany subjugated England she would

probably ally herself with Japan and within a few years make a joint attack on the United States.

Once I asked him if he thought he had genius.

"Most emphatically not," he answered, and spoke of occupations at which he wished to excel but according to his statement did not excel. He said he was not a first-rate horseman ("My hands aren't good"), or boxer ("My arms are too short"), or shot ("I'm blind in one eye"), or orator ("I haven't a good voice"), or writer ("Except perhaps that I have a good instinct and a liking for simplicity and directness"). Yet he was the former colonel of Roosevelt's Rough Riders, had supplied the Museum of Natural History with its famous collection of African big game, was one of the most formidable political campaigners this country ever saw, and an author who, if he had achieved nothing else in life, would have earned solid fame through his books.

"If I have anything at all resembling genius," he said, "it is the gift for leadership. Men will follow me." And he added, "To tell the truth, I like to believe that by what I have accomplished *without* great gifts I may be a source of encouragement to American boys."

His thought for American boys was characteristic, for he had a special tenderness for children. As a child he had struggled with ill-health and his rugged body had been built up only by sheer determination. And that was what he wanted all of us to have—the kind of determination that makes a people strong and



rugged and virile and united. Throughout his mature life he urged those qualities upon us, and sometimes he was abused for doing it.

Thinking of this I once said to him that I did not see how he had kept from becoming cynical about mankind.

"I am not cynical," he replied, "because I have observed that just when our people seem to be altogether beyond hope they have a way of turning round and doing something perfectly magnificent."

As our little group used to go in the old days to Theodore Roosevelt for stimulus and comfort, those of us who remain turn to him in memory. Often it seems to me I know, as if I had just been talking with him, what he would think and feel today.

His first thought would be for the men of Wake and Midway and the Philippines, those all too few heroic men whose deeds belong to history and the poets.

His next thought would be for us, and it would be colored with uneasiness lest our traditional feeling of safety from attack make us incredulous and complacent, so that we take too long to reach the point of "doing something perfectly magnificent."

And perhaps he would repeat to us the message delivered in a speech he made in 1899:

"I preach to you, then, my countrymen, that our country calls not for the life of ease, but for the life of strenuous endeavor. The twentieth century looms before us big with the fate of many nations. If we stand

idly by, if we seek merely swollen, slothful ease and ignoble peace, if we shrink from the hard contests where men must win at hazard of their lives and at the risk of all they hold dear, then the bolder and stronger people will pass by us and will win for themselves the domination of the world.

"Let us therefore boldly face the life of strife, resolute to do our duty well and manfully; resolute to uphold righteousness by deed and by word; resolute to be both honest and brave, to serve high ideals, yet to use practical methods. Above all, let us not shrink from strife, moral or physical, within or without the Nation, provided we are certain the strife is justified; for it is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavor, that we shall ultimately win the goal of true national greatness."



# Dr. Joseph Goldberger

1874-1929

by

Paul de Kruif

WHEN YOU BELIEVE ENOUGH IN YOUR OWN SCIENCE TO be ready to give up your own life to convince the world of it—then with luck you have a chance to become a giant your country will remember. In 1916 Dr. Joseph Goldberger risked his life for truth. He was a lone-wolf searcher of our United States Public Health Service. He held the scientifically absolutely unorthodox belief that pellagra was not contagious. He knew

it was a hidden hunger—for vitamins that had not then been discovered.

In his fight to solve the pellagra mystery, Goldberger faced the major obstacle that he had no laboratory animal to which he could give the sickness. His laboratory was our Southland. He wandered out, in 1914, from the Hygienic Laboratory in Washington, to a Georgia madhouse, to southern asylums, and into the hovels of southern have-nots. His experimental animals in those early days were a red-rashed, weary, lazy, discouraged, often demented rag-tag-and-bobtail of American humanity.

He was a gentle, woolgathering, and dreamy Jew, making his own observations, caring little for the opinion of so-called scientific authority. He was no high-pressure salesman of his own science. The scientific world could take it or leave it. His exact observations were from the first hooted down by physicians experienced in the pellagrous doom of human beings. Worst of all, why get het up about this pellagra, anyway? Goldberger's lowly experimental human subjects would perhaps relieve society of an economic burden if they would only quickly up and die!

Such were the obstacles Joseph Goldberger had to try to hurdle to call scientific attention to a hidden vitamin hunger that is now known to sap the vigor not only of our have-nots in the South but of Americans in every walk of life.

Here was Goldberger's first and fundamental observation: the difference between people who rot to

demented death from pellagra and people who never get it is that pellagrins are poor. Goldberger, stalking stoop-shouldered, peering, questioning, always gentle, always dreamy through southern mill villages, plantations, asylums, found this drastic difference between the well-off and the poor—

The prosperous eat what the poor can't afford to buy.

In an asylum where the red death was killing six out of every hundred inmates, he saw that doctors, orderlies, nurses never caught this supposedly contagious pellagra. In this institution he saw this: that it was not the sick inmates who got the milk and the choice cuts of meat. In squalid mill villages our dreamy doctor prowled. Where the nervous weakness, the gnawing indigestion sent poor people to demented death, there the staff of life was the 3 M's—meat, meal, and molasses. It was white meat but not the white meat of turkeys or chickens. It was sow belly and fat back devoid of lean.

Then in two Mississippi orphanages, where the kids were listless and unnaturally well-behaved—because of early pellagra—Goldberger got permission to feed these little ones daily milk and lean meat, and the children quickly grew mischievous and bright and a pleasure to their teachers, and the pellagra vanished.

But such science was too simple for many a scientific highbrow; and now at the Rankin Prison Farm in Mississippi, with the permission of the governor, and on the promise that they would be pardoned, Gold-

berger gave a band of tough convicts the unquestioned pellagra just by keeping them for a few months on diets of that white fat pork meat, meal, and molasses.

The authenticity of this experimental pellagra was vouched for by expert skin doctors, yet even now powerful scientific authorities insisted that pellagra was merely a contagion, like typhoid fever. But could he be right, with all the scientific world against him? Well, he would settle it. There was one way to convince them. So now, somnambulistic, oblivious to his own dear wife and children, keeping his plans secret from friends and superiors, enchanted, Joseph Goldberger got ready—for the sole purpose of laying his own gnawing doubts—a dreadful self-experimentation. It was as revolting as it might perchance be deadly—that is, if his scientific opponents happened to be right, and if our dreamer himself was wrong . . .

Goldberger was notorious for his modesty. But now he was proud. He was forced by his searcher's pride to risk his dark deep urge to understand, to pierce the yet not finally tested hunch held by himself alone against a self-experiment the outcome of which might well be death.

He could plead this excuse for his lonely outlaw science—against his family, against the government yes, against Joseph Goldberger. He was goaded to it not because his scientific opponents had proved his science to be wrong by proper experiment, but because they tried to kill his truth by ignoring it. His wild project was the more astounding when you con-

sider his gentleness. No, he growled, no, pellagra is not contagious, infectious. I know it. I'll prove 'it. So now his hunch drove him to that desperation displayed by Captain Ahab in his hunt for the white whale, Moby Dick. Alone in the washroom of a Pullman car going north toward Washington he made the intestinal discharges of a dead pellagrin up into pills with a little flour. Would these give him pellagra? He ate them. Then he injected himself with ground-up suspensions of pellagrous ulcers, and with the pellagrous blood of those who had died. So he bet his understanding against his life. Alone. And he did not get sick. And he did not die.

But now consider what next occurred. After he made this solitary rendezvous with truth, he determined that others must similarly risk their lives to bear witness. What if, perchance, he was naturally immune to pellagra?

So now he asked his comrades, his cronies of the United States Public Health Service to join him, to demonstrate, maybe, that his own personal survival had been only a fluke, an accident. But what had these fourteen colleagues (who, now volunteered) to gain from the risk in which they joined him? It was not their theory. It was not their headache. It was only Goldberger's. So, in three successive experiments, these fourteen men of the United States Public Health Service, and his own wife, Mary Farrar Goldberger, made free with their lives. They let Goldberger try to infect them with the blood of the dying pellagrins.

They were bold fools, all of them. But they did not come down with pellagra.

So they conquered themselves to give Goldberger his final satisfaction, the proof of his insight that pellagra was not infectious. So they gave mankind life.

The government gave them no overtime, no extra pay, not even a pat on the back for this work, not in the line of duty. And glory? It is doubtful if a single one of you, readers, know the name of even one of those who helped Goldberger find this truth, that demolished his scientific enemies for all times and that has now begun to result in staying mankind's hidden hunger.

That was the way Joseph Goldberger, the most soft-spoken and gentlest of scientific desperadoes—in the years when the American people cared little for the fate of our hidden hungry have-nots—fumbled toward the discovery of America's widespread hidden hunger, of our chronic chemical famine. For this in the past ten years has become plain, for every one thousand poor-white-trash man or woman who dies of pellagra, thirty or forty thousand suffer the sickness in a form short of fatal. And for these thirty or forty who are obviously pellagrous, there are many more who are nervous, weary, afraid for no reason, suffering vague aches and pains, insomniac, irritable, and not living on the possible top step of life that comes from food rich in B vitamins against the hidden hunger.

Before he died, which he did too soon, in 1929, of cancer of the kidney, Joseph Goldberger did suc-



ceed in getting his pellagra over into dogs, giving them the pellagra-mimicking disease called black tongue. Then, using such dogs, Wisconsin's brilliant vitamin chemist Conrad Elvehjem discovered the precise chemical, the lack of which in food caused pellagra's forlorn to drop into demented death.

This was nicotinic acid. And now by its cheap simple magic, at Hillman Hospital in Birmingham, Alabama, famine-fighting Dr. Tom D. Spies proved that nobody need die of pellagra at all. In the past six years he has proved that the death rate of people seriously enough pellagrous to have to be hospitalized, formerly 50 out of every 100, can be cut down to zero. For six years no pellagrin has died at Hillman Hospital, and many thousands have been cured.

And today, this cheap chemical, nicotinic acid, now called "niacin," together with other B vitamin chemicals, such as thiamin and riboflavin, strengthening our country's white bread, are giving promise to abolish our widespread B vitamin hunger, to make us a nation of far harder workers and tougher fighters, to give us stamina for production, and courage to fight for freedom.



JULIA WARD HOWE.

# Julia Ward Howe

1819-1910

by

Alexander Woollcott



HIS IS THE STORY OF A VALIANT AND gracious woman to whom, in a dark hour in this nation's history and in the unmapped half-world that lies between sleeping and waking, it was given to put down on paper certain words which have since been recognized as an imponderable and inalienable part of the national wealth, words which will last at least as long as America does. Perhaps longer. Her name was Julia Ward Howe and the words made up certain stanzas which she sold to the *Atlantic Monthly* for five dollars. To these stanzas, the lavish editor of that magazine affixed the title "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and published them in his issue for February, 1862.

On the Fourth of July, 1941, that hymn rang

through the echoing crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, still miraculously standing after so much of London all about it had been battered to rubble. The occasion was the unyeiling of a memorial tablet to Billy Fiske, the first American to give his life in this war. The singers were the still surviving fliers from his own squadron, and certain young American volunteers who had crossed the seas to make up the Eagle Squadron. Standing together in the candlelike dusk of the crypt, this symbolic group of Anglo-American courage sang Billy Fiske to his rest with the words:

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the  
coming of the Lord;  
He is trampling out the vintage where  
the grapes of wrath are stored; . . .

Fragments of the hymn came back to our Quentin Reynolds when he was describing that service in an overseas broadcast addressed rather pointedly to Dr. Goebbels in Berlin.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall  
never call retreat;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men before  
His judgment-seat;  
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be  
jubilant, my feet!

If, on that occasion, the fliers did not sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" or, singing it, at least made no impression that still lingered with Mr. Reynolds when he came to do his broadcast, it is not hard to guess

why. That superb and stirring tune is the answer to a bandmaster's prayer and can quicken the heartbeat of any homesick American when he hears it wafted from the quarterdeck of any ship of ours at anchor in a distant harbor. Ever since the turn of the century, and a little before that, the army and the navy have made the playing of it obligatory on sundry occasions. After a multitudinous agitation lasting a third of a century, Congress, as recently as 1931, was finally badgered into declaring it our national anthem. But just as Congress cannot make a piece of paper valuable by merely calling it money, so it cannot turn any old song into a national anthem by decrec. As a national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner" has one disturbing defect. It cannot be sung. Its melody was written for the changing voice and has never been successfully assaulted by any man after the age of puberty.

Unfortunately the Battle Hymn also has its own drawbacks as a national anthem. Its tune, with or without the words Mrs. Howe wrote for it, was the song of one side in the bitter War Between the States, a tune to which the soldiers in blue also lamented the death of John Brown and lyrically declared their intention (in which they did not persist) of hanging the president of the seceding Confederacy to a tree of which the fruit was, for some obscure reason, to be sour apples. Of course the wounds of that time have long since healed. But he would be a silly and slovenly historian who suggested that they had left no scar tissue.

From so much it will be seen that, just as Samuel

Francis Smith did when he wrote "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" and Francis Scott Key when he wrote "The Star-Spangled Banner," so Mrs. Howe set her words to a tune already familiar. It happened in this fashion. Mrs. Howe—she had been the lovely Julia Ward of New York—was married to the famous Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe of Boston. As a youth Dr. Howe had served with the Greeks fighting for independence at Missolonghi and, returning to his native heath, had become the great pathfinder in the healing and education of the blind. When, wretchedly equipped and incompetently led, the raw, young Army of the Potomac was taking shape, Dr. Howe's neighbor, the governor, sent him off to Washington to look into the health of the Massachusetts troops. Of course Mrs. Howe went along and so did their parson, James Freeman Clarke. From the window of her room at Willard's Hotel, Mrs. Howe could see the watchfires of a hundred circling camps. All day and all night recruits from the north and west poured into Washington, and the scuff-scuff of their feet on the march provided the lullaby to which she went to sleep. Always they sang the same song, "John Brown's Body," sang it to an old camp-meeting tune which the bandmaster of the 12th Massachusetts had adapted to marching. It was Dr. Clarke who suggested one day that Mrs. Howe might find new words for that tune. "I have often prayed that I might," she said.

That night her prayer was answered. In the hour before sunup, when the dawn showed gray at her win-

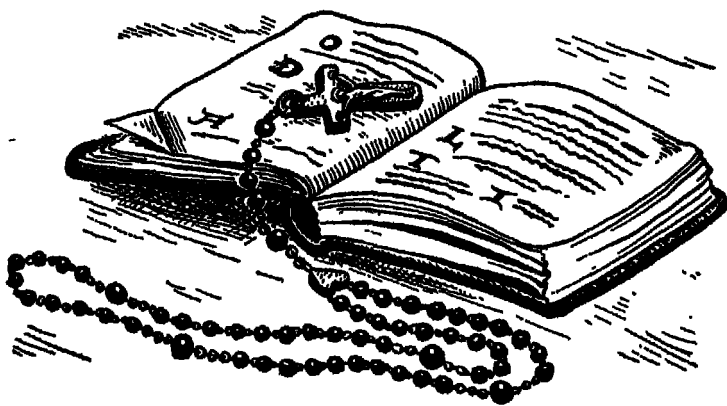
dow, she awoke with the verses forming themselves in her mind. Now such composition is the stuff that dreams are made of, and can vanish like the dew before the rising sun. More than once just such a fantasy had visited her at that hour, only to evaporate before her day began. This time something moved her to catch at the words before they fled. The darkness proved no hindrance, for in the nursery back home in Boston she had learned to do much of her writing as she sat on guard beside a cradle. So, without pausing to dress, and without waiting for daylight, she fumbled in the desk for a pen and for a bit of the stationery of the Sanitary Commission to which Dr. Howe was attached. You will find the resulting manuscript in the Congressional Library. Or at least you will unless, like the Declaration of Independence and Magna Charta, it has already been removed to a place of safekeeping for the duration of the war.

Of the many who learned the new words to the old tune from their first appearance in the *Atlantic* was a man named McCabe—fighting chaplain of the 122nd Ohio. He memorized every verse before he put the magazine down. McCabe was taken prisoner at Winchester, and that she had wrought some magic, Mrs. Howe may have realized for the first time when, after his release, Chaplain McCabe described to a huge audience in Washington his adventures in Libby Prison. In particular he told of the night when a Negro smuggled in the news of Gettysburg, and all the jubilant prisoners sang the Battle Hymn. On the platform

in Washington that night, McCabe cut loose with the song once more. As Mrs. Howe's daughters, in a life of their mother, told the story years later, "the effect was magical: people shouted, wept, and sang, all together; and when the song was ended, above the tumult of applause was heard the voice of Abraham Lincoln, exclaiming, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, 'Sing it again!'"

As a fledgling reporter on the *New York Times*, I saw Mrs. Howe when she took part in some ceremony on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House in September, 1909. She had been ninety in May of that year and only recently I heard of a message she sent on her ninetieth birthday to a friend of hers. It was a jaunty message of only seven words, and I can't get them out of my head. These were the words: "I march to the brave music still." Thus the author of the *Battle Hymn* when she was ninety. Today that message of hers must stir a question in many an anxious American heart. She marched to the brave music still. Do we? Do we? This year—and next—will provide the answer.





# James Cardinal Gibbons

1834-1921

by  
William Agar

AMERICA TREATED JAMES GIBBONS WELL. WHEN HE WAS born in Baltimore his parents had recently come over from Ireland. They were honest, industrious, but unknown. Before he reached his sixtieth year he was James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, loved by fellow citizens of every creed, adviser of presidents, a man to whom the nation turned instinctively for guidance and advice. The reason was apparent. The keen blue eyes looking out from a finely formed

and singularly mobile face reflected the insight and understanding that lay behind them. No one talking to the cardinal could fail to understand that his mind had instantly grasped their problem and that his thoughts had probably far outrun theirs. This, together with the determined set of his jaw and his disarming simplicity, was what made men trust even his instantaneous decisions.

As the years went by the slight figure of the cardinal, never very robust but with a characteristically springy step, always clothed in simple black, with scarcely any sign to indicate his exalted rank, became a common and a welcome sight on the streets of Baltimore. His daily walks conformed to a strict schedule but he stopped and talked to all who greeted him. He had a word for everyone—a question to ask or a remark to make which showed that he really remembered them. He was perfectly at ease with everybody, the highest and the lowest, and he made each man feel that he respected him. This extraordinary capacity of his to recall the life, the hopes, the problems of every human being he had ever met before naturally endeared him to all and caused a leading journalist to write of him after he died: "Nearly always what he said was what the mind of America was thinking." Gibbons himself attributed his rise to fame and power solely to American institutions and if he gloried over any accomplishment of his it was only this—that he lived as he was born, simply, a man of the people.

His nature was such that, while only scholars

could plumb the deepest resources of his mind, children found in him a playful companion who could enter into their games and their thoughts as though he were still a child himself. It is true that the only people who had cause to fear him were those who sought him out to use the influence and the power of his position for their own ends. To them he could be formidable.

Like many another Catholic boy, Gibbons was drawn to the Church from his youth. He entered the Baltimore Seminary at twenty-one. At thirty-four he was a bishop, the youngest in the Church, and was sent out immediately as a missionary to North Carolina. Always frail, he could eat few things, so the prospect of unending journeys was not too pleasant, but, undaunted, he at once undertook a tour of his diocese. It was, perhaps, a lucky chance that there were few churches and that Catholic homes to shelter him were rare, since that put him in constant touch with people of different faiths. In Greenville he was welcomed and taken into the home of a Protestant physician. He was offered the Town Hall in which to preach. But, since the trustees of the Methodist Church were kind enough to put their church at his disposal, he chose to hold his service there and read to them from their own Bible. It was in this spirit that he went from place to place throughout the state rounding up his own sparse flock, yet, under the circumstances, preaching mostly to Protestants, dispelling prejudice, making friends, until his biographer could write of him:

"There developed a pride in the youthful prelate, their own Bishop, pre-eminently a man of the people, mingling with all and gaining friends everywhere by his rare graces of manner."

It is characteristic that once in a little church in tidewater Maryland, at the height of the summer heat after the priest whom he had designated to preach had completed a discussion of Catholic doctrine he, the cardinal by then, arose and preached another sermon on Christian unity. Later, in answer to the priest's question, he said, "Did you not see that most of the congregation were Protestants?"

His fame grew. Upon his return to America, after attending the Vatican Council, he was made Bishop of Richmond and at forty-three became Archbishop of Baltimore, the senior see in America. At fifty-two he was a cardinal, an honor acclaimed throughout the land, since he was now identified in the public mind with the welfare of his country. An honor conferred on him was already an honor conferred on America.

In 1887 he was in Rome again, this time to receive the cardinal's red hat. He used the opportunity to emphasize what was nearest to his heart: the importance to America and to the Church in America of the separation of church and state. Throughout Europe at this time Catholics and Protestants alike believed that some form of union between church and state was necessary. Separation meant antagonism to them and many looked askance at the American system as a sign of the irreligion of our government. It was not cus-

tomary for a young cardinal to make more than a formal acceptance speech at such a time, but Gibbons did. He ascribed great progress to the Church in America and praised the civil liberties enjoyed "in our enlightened states." In his words, "The civil government holds over us the aegis of its protection, without interfering with us in the legitimate exercise of our sublime mission as ministers of the gospel of Christ. Our country has liberty without license, and authority without despotism." Separation, he claimed, meant not hostility but protection.

The Knights of Labor, the first powerful American workingman's union, grew in importance during the difficult years that followed the Civil War. Already the Canadian hierarchy had condemned the organization as a secret society seeking to abolish religion and the Congregation of the Holy Office in Rome had sustained the condemnation. Many American bishops concurred, since they feared the revolutionary tendencies of the Knights. But the young cardinal did not fear them. He feared rather that the Church should appear as the oppressor of the poor. After conferring with President Cleveland and assuring himself that the Knights were in no way unpatriotic, he succeeded in winning many bishops to his point of view and determined to take the matter to Rome. But no one believed he could affect the decision of the Holy Office. It was impossible; it had never been done before.

The details of his campaign are unimportant now. He persevered. His letter to Cardinal Simeoni is one

of the great charters of the labor movement. His advice finally prevailed and the condemnation was withdrawn. Thus was a mistake corrected, a mistake that could have set back the labor movement throughout the world, and the seed the cardinal had sown blossomed shortly in Pius XI's immortal encyclical, *The Reconstruction of the Social Order*.

At this time, also, the ever-increasing number of immigrants from Catholic Europe who remained in the eastern seaboard cities favored the development of national groups. These groups tended to establish their own churches and to bring over their own priests with closer ties to Europe than to America—a fact that was obviously dangerous to the Church and which prepared the way for the growth of powerful political units. Gibbons believed one of the duties of the Church was to Americanize and absorb these people and, in so far as this has been accomplished, it was due largely to his efforts. When Archbishops Ireland and Spaulding sought to colonize the Midwest with Irish from the eastern slums the cardinal of Baltimore was one of the few eastern bishops who helped them. Yet men were being lost to the Church, indeed to civilization, because of the conditions under which they lived, conditions which Archbishop Spaulding of New York condemned in lurid terms. "The description," he wrote, "given by sanitary inspectors of these habitations would soil a page intended for all eyes. People who live in this atmosphere and among these surroundings *must* drink. The perfectly sober would die from

mere loathing of life." But America was making money. Cheap labor was useful. So the attempt failed. Gibbons and his few fellow churchmen were right. The cancer spread. America woke up one day to discover herself infested with the gangsters bred in the slums she had been too shortsighted to clean up.

There are other things that could be told. Theodore Roosevelt said there was only one public man with the courage to speak the truth on all occasions and that man was Cardinal Gibbons. For the cardinal decried the vices of America as fervently as he praised the American way, but he never criticized an evil without proposing a remedy. Nevertheless, no man has ever been so outspoken without making enemies. Because of his eminence in the Church and his friendship with the president, Gibbons was accused of seeking to control America. His declarations of Catholic loyalty were sneered at as Catholic wiles, as a screen to hide his true intentions. But President Cleveland defended him and the mutterings of his detractors were of no importance compared to the acclaim that came to him. He had proved by his life that in order to be a good Catholic in America one must also be a good American.

He was not called upon to lay down his life for his country. He left behind no words to stir the pulse of patriots. But he loved America and believed in her. His religion was a practical thing. His life was a life of action. In his presence prejudice grew dim and man

learned to understand his fellow man. Because of him, America drew closer to her ideal.

He died in the city of his birth. The bell in the City Hall tolled once for each year of his life. City courts were suspended. The legislatures of New York and Delaware adjourned. Ex-President Taft declared that he belonged not to the Church alone but to the world at large. But it was the governor of Maryland who told us why the cardinal is important to Americans today. The governor said, "He has broken down many barriers between men."







ANDREW JACKSON

# Andrew Jackson

1767-1845

by

Marquis James



IF ANDREW JACKSON WERE IN OUR midst at this writing he would fly into Hitler and into the Japs on every field, land and sea and air, where a chance of battle, something less than foolhardy, presented; and he would lick the living daylights out of them. He would lick them because he would have the *will* to do so and the power to inspire men to deeds beyond their strength. Time and again Jackson did what seemed to nearly everyone else to be impossible. He did it because he willed it.

Take the duel with Dickinson. Our national heroes have not been, uniformly, earthly saints. Dueling was a barbarous practice which Jackson did little to discourage. Yet if a duel were ever justified it was when Jackson met Dickinson. Dickinson had slandered

Jackson's wife. For once Jackson hesitated to fight because he did not wish to advertise his somewhat tempestuous courtship of his beloved Rachel. Failing to shut Dickinson's foul mouth, at length he challenged—ostensibly over a horse race, though the subterfuge fooled no one.

Charles Dickinson was one of the best shots in the West. He could pin a ten of spades to a tree, back off twenty paces—ordinary dueling range—and put ten balls through the ten spots. Jackson went on the field expecting to be killed. "But," he told his second, General Overton, "I'll live long enough to kill him, even with a bullet in my brain." Deliberately Jackson permitted Dickinson to fire first. Dickinson's ball struck Jackson in the breast, lodging so near the heart that it could never be removed. Believing himself dying, Jackson summoned the uttermost resources of his will, raised his pistol, took careful aim—and killed Charles Dickinson.

Fifty other instances of the Jacksonian will could be cited which frame its master in a fairer light, if it's a balanced portrait you want. This is no balanced portrait. (These are not balanced times.) This is a sketch of a fighting man.

In the fall of 1813 Jackson was in the field against England's Creek Indian allies in what is now Alabama. He had won two battles. The militia he commanded thought this glory enough. Many of them were sick and all were hungry. The guardhouse lawyers in the ranks of one brigade figured that brigade's time was

up. The brigade marched out of camp, headed for home. This was a problem nearly every American military commander before Jackson had tussled with in vain. Militiamen were a law unto themselves; but this time they were up against a leader who was a law unto himself. Jackson was as hungry as any of his men and so racked by dysentery that he could hardly stand. His left arm, broken by a bullet, was in a sling. Riding past the deserters he seized a musket from a soldier, wheeled in front of the retreating column and laid the barrel of the musket on his horse's neck for support. The column halted. Jackson swore he'd shoot the first man who moved another step toward Tennessee. No one tried it.

A gangling, freckle-faced, sandy-haired boy growing up in the backwoods of South Carolina, Andy Jackson was always too tall for his weight, too light to be a good wrestler. "I could throw him three times out of four," a schoolmate said, "but he would never *stay* thrown." A widow and three sons comprised the Jackson family. The father had died before the youngest, Andrew, was born. When the Revolutionary War started the boy's uncle, Robert Crawford, raised a cavalry company which Andy's eldest brother, Hugh, joined at sixteen. He died in service during the first campaign.

Two years later the other Jackson boys enlisted. Robert was sixteen and Andrew thirteen years and four months of age. In nine months' time the brothers fought in several engagements and then were captured

after a bloody defeat of Major Crawford's command. Ordered to clean the boots of a British dragoon officer, Andy indignantly refused and received a saber cut on the head which marked him for life. Eventually the youthful prisoners were exchanged, both ill of small-pox. Robert died a few days after his release. When Andrew recovered, his mother, who had nursed soldiers all through the war, journeyed to Charleston where some of the neighbor boys lay with "ship fever" in the British prison hulks. Elizabeth Jackson herself succumbed to the plague and was buried in an unmarked grave on the gloomy flat of Charleston Neck. Andrew Jackson, not yet fifteen, was an orphan of the Revolution.

So much for a skeleton of the facts from which proceeded Andrew Jackson's almost fanatical love of country. Who assailed the honor or the security of the United States assailed Andrew Jackson himself, the memory of his brothers and of his mother.

With his way in the world to win he plunged into the wilderness beyond the mountains and bore a locally conspicuous part in carving out the state of Tennessee. He served in both houses of Congress. As a member of the state's highest bench he contributed much to the establishment of respect for courts, which in a border community is sometimes easier said than done. A typical frontiersman who had got in trouble defied a sheriff and posse to bring him into Judge Jackson's court. The jurist left the bench. Drawing a

pistol he invited the accused to surrender. The man complied.

The office in which Jackson took the greatest pride was that of major general of the Tennessee militia. The Creek campaign of 1813 set a new record for American militia. In 1814 when the British gathered their forces for a finishing blow in Louisiana, General Andrew Jackson was sent to meet them. No one else coveted the distinction.

From the start of the war the country had been divided by counsel of isolationists and appeasers. The events of recent months had placed this gentry in an excellent position to say, "I told you so." Most of the Maine coast had been seized and annexed, Eastport burned, Nantucket captured, the Cape Cod towns sacked or laid under tribute. A frightened cry went up for peace at any price. The British moved into the Chesapeake and brushing aside a force thrice their number occupied Washington, burning the Capitol and the White House. After shelling Baltimore and throwing Philadelphia and New York into panic, the enemy returned to its shipping which stood to sea—for Louisiana, to wind up the job.

In New Orleans Jackson found a regiment of regulars and a battalion of local militia, against whom the British were moving: 10,000 seamen in fifty-odd ships, 1,500 marines and 9,600 troops, some of them Wellington's veterans.

The threatened city was filled with appeasers.

Fifth columnists were all over. Why risk the destruction of a rich and beautiful city for no purpose? The British were sure to win anyhow. "That ardent zeal which the crisis demands is lacking," Governor Claiborne confessed to the man who had come to defend Louisiana.

Jackson made short work of appeasers' pleas. He would fight below New Orleans, he said. If beaten there he would fight in New Orleans. If beaten there he would fight above New Orleans; fight until no living thing could stand in his path.

Jackson proclaimed martial law and a levy en masse. He ransacked the town for firearms, tools, teams, wagons, and men to handle them. Objectors were clapped in jail, and no nice distinctions drawn. While en route to the city the general had called on the governors of western states for troops. In all these matters Jackson moved without authority from Washington. Later a court found several of his acts unconstitutional. Had General Jackson requested official sanction to do what he did, the British would have been upon him before the letter reached the Potomac. Moreover, Jackson had no way of knowing whether we *had* a government on the Potomac. At last accounts it had scattered.

It is just as well that no modern miracle of communication enabled Andrew Jackson to be in touch with Washington. Knowledge of the shape of events there would not have helped the people he was trying to stiffen with fighting spirit. The capital was in a blue



funk. The defeat of Jackson—a mere Indian fighter who had scarcely seen the face of a civilized foe—was taken for granted. A large part of the East looked for salvation to the Hartford Convention. One newspaper said that, if the administration did not sue for peace, New England should secede and sue separately.

Yes, it is a good thing that New Orleans could remain in ignorance of this. As matters stood, Jackson began to inspire hope so quickly that to this hour the achievement defies rational explanation. Night and day he raised, armed, and drilled troops. Outside regiments commenced to arrive. "Insurmountable obstacles," wrote a Louisianian serving as a military engineer, "melted before the devastating energy of the commander. This energy spread to the whole army, composed of heterogeneous elements, speaking different languages and brought up in different habits. There was nothing it did not feel capable of doing if he ordered it to be done."

And how much time was Jackson given to accomplish all this? Twenty-three days after setting foot on the soil of Louisiana he fought his first battle with the British. Sixteen days later he fought his fourth and last. This was the incredible engagement of January 8, 1815, in which Andrew Jackson obliterated the army of General Sir Edward Pakenham.

Though grim times are with us now and grimmer may lie ahead, it is hard to imagine the country in direr straits than it was when Andrew Jackson went to Louisiana. The plain fact is that it will never be in

quite those straits unless the dark days of this war should produce an undercover Hartford Convention, asking for a premature peace.



# Nathan Hale

1755-1776

by

Nancy Hale

"THE BOY WAS ONLY A COUPLE OF YEARS OUT OF NEW Haven when he joined up. He'd hardly got started. He'd been teaching school, you know, up at East Haddam and then down in New London, and it looked as if he was shaping up into a fine teacher. He'd made a lot of friends everywhere he went, and the girls always liked him. They say he was a good-looking boy.

"Then the war came. Things had looked bad to us Americans for a long time, but when the first gun was fired on that April day it seemed to light a sudden strong fire in everyone's heart. It seemed to call out—'Americans!' The boy's brothers, John and Joseph, volunteered first off. It was a patriotic family—the father'd been a Deputy in the old Connecticut Assembly. The boy himself had signed up with the school for a year. He wasn't the kind to let people down, but he did write and ask to be released from his contract two weeks early. He joined up in July, as a Lieutenant in Webb's Seventh Connecticut.

"Well, you know how things went after that. The boy was in camp up near Boston all winter. It wasn't an exciting siege. But there was a lot to do getting the men to re-enlist. Most of their terms of enlistment ran out in December. The General was worried about it. Our boy offered the men in his company his own pay for a month if they'd stay that much longer. Anyway the siege was maintained.

"He got a leave in the winter and went home. Maybe that was when he got engaged. Alicia Adams. A lovely girl; they would have made a handsome couple. When Spring came the enemy evacuated Boston and our army went down to New York, where real trouble was threatening. The boy'd been made a captain by that time. He was twenty-one years old.

"Our Long Island campaign was just this side of disastrous. Morale was none too good, afterwards. I don't suppose the General was in a worse spot in the

whole war than he was for those three weeks right after the Battle of Long Island. There we lay, facing the enemy across the East River, and no way of knowing what they had up their sleeve. Surprise was what we feared. The answer to that was companies of rangers, to scout around and find out what was up. Knowlton's Rangers was organized, and our boy switched over to it. He wanted action, you see.

"But the rangers weren't enough. The General wanted to know two things: when the enemy was planning to attack, and where. Nobody could tell him. The General let it be known that he'd welcome volunteers to spy.

"Now, people didn't take kindly to the word 'spy' around these parts. It didn't mean excitement or glamour or any of those things. It meant something degrading. It was a job they gave to tramps, who didn't care. But the General said he wanted a spy. Well, our boy volunteered. His friends tried to talk him out of it. They spoke of the indignity; they also told him he'd make a terrible spy—frank, open boy like him.

"But his idea was, the job was necessary. That was the great thing. Its being necessary seemed to him to make it honorable. He was sent through the enemy lines dressed up like a Dutch schoolmaster.

"He didn't make such a bad spy, after all. He got what he went after, and hid the drawings in his shoes. He was on his way back, crossing their lines, when they caught him. They found the information on him. He admitted he was over there to spy. You know

what a spy gets. They hanged him in the morning. He wrote some letters to the family at home, but they were destroyed before his eyes, they say. But in his last moment, they let him say what he wanted to. And later one of their officers told one of our officers what he'd said.

"There he was, with the noose around his neck. He hadn't got much done. He'd got caught on the first big job of his life. He wasn't going to marry Alicia Adams, nor to have any children, nor to do any more teaching, nor to finish fighting this war. He stood there in the morning air, and he spoke and said who he was, his commission and all. And then he added, 'I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.' "

You could tell the story like that, simply, because it is a simple story, and when you'd finished you'd have told about all there is to tell about Nathan Hale. There isn't even a contemporary picture of him. Most of the friends to whom he wrote didn't keep his letters. He was just a young American who'd gone to war, who'd lived for twenty-one ordinary enough years before—in the day's work—he died for his country.

One of his brothers, Enoch, was my great-great-grandfather.

When I was a child there was a small bronze statue, about four feet high, that stood in the corner of the living room at home. It was just about my height, but it wasn't another child. It was a young man, with his wrists tied behind him and his ankles

bound. I passed it several times a day, every day of my childhood. Sometimes I used to touch the bronze face. It was a small-scale replica of the Nathan Hale statue at Yale.

I must have been told his story, because I always knew it. But my father never went on about it, if you know what I mean. There his story was; for what it might mean to you. Some of my other ancestors were the kind of characters that have a whole legend of anecdotes surrounding them, pointed, stirring, or uproarious. But the young man with his hands bound had died at twenty-one, a patriot, as stark and all alone and anecdoteless as young men of twenty-one must be.

Once I was set upon the knees of an old gentleman whose grandmother had been Alicia Adams. She had married and had children, and lived to be eighty-eight, a pretty, sparkling old lady. And when she died she said, "Where is Nathan?" But about the young man himself there were no family reminiscences, no odd little jokes, no tales beyond the short, plain story of his life and death. He had had no time to do anything memorable but die.

Nevertheless . . . It was my job as a child to fill the kitchen scuttle with coal from the cellar. I was not a brave child, and to me the long corners of the cellar seemed menacing and full of queer, moving shadows—wolves? robbers? I cannot remember when I first started taking the thought of Nathan Hale down cellar with me, for a shield and buckler. I thought, "If

he could be hanged, I can go down cellar." The thing was, he was no impossible hero; he was a member of the family, and he was young too. He was a hero you could take along with you into the cellar of a New England farmhouse. You felt he'd be likely to say, "Aren't any wolves or robbers back there that I can see."

Well, I am grown up now and I know very little more about Nathan Hale than I did then. There are, of course, a mass of details about his short life. A devoted scholar named George Dudley Seymour has spent years in collecting all that can be collected about him. There's a wartime diary. They know his friends. He played football and checkers at camp. He drank wine at Brown's Tavern and cider at Stone's. But when you add all these little things you only affirm the peculiar simplicity of the story.

Hale is a symbol of all the young American men who fight and who die for us. Partly he is a symbol because he was the first of our heroes in the first of our own wars. He was the first to show the world what Americans are made of. The reason they destroyed his letters home at the time of his death was, they said, so that "the rebels should not know they have a man who can die so firmly." He showed them.

He is no Washington or Jefferson although he ranks with the heroes. Washington was a great general and Jefferson was a genius. All of our nation's heroes are great men who are great by their minds and by their deeds and by their careers. All except Hale. His



special gift to his country, and to us who love that country, was the manner of his death.

He is the young American. He is the patron of all the young Americans who have grown up as he did in quiet self-respecting families; who have gone to college and done well, and had fun too; who have started out along their life's careers, well spoke of, promising; and then broken off to join their country's forces in time of war without an instant's hesitation; knowing what must be done and who must do it. He was no different than they. He was an American boy. Everything that can be said of them can be said of him. In the letters of his friends written about him after his death, certain words keep cropping up. They sound oddly familiar. "Promising . . . patriotic . . . generous . . . modest . . . high-spirited . . . devoted . . ." His friends fitted the words to Hale. They fit Americans.

Nothing was more American in Hale than his taking on the duties that led to his death. It was a dirty job, spying. Nobody wanted it. He took it. He wasn't a remarkably articulate boy. His letters are nothing special. He just jotted things in his diary. But he became the spokesman for young American fighting men who have to die for their country. He chanced to say the thing they think; the thing they mean, when there's not even a split second to think. He stood there at Turtle Bay on Manhattan Island. Don't think he declaimed. He wasn't that kind. He had those few moments, and he was thinking about all the different things that were ending for him. He said, and I

think it was more like a remark:

“ I only regret . . . ”



# Roger Williams

1604?-1683

by

Stanley High

TO GET THEIR HANDS ON THE MEN WHO GOT THE UNITED States into this war, Berlin and Tokyo will have to reach a long way back in American history. On one front or another, Americans have been in this war for three centuries. For this is not, merely, a critical interlude which, when history gets around to it, will be set off in a chapter by itself. If this were that kind of war the United States might not win it.

This, rather, is the mechanized and global version of the old struggle to determine whether man is only

fit to be mastered or whether he is good enough to be master.

The totalitarianisms which Americans have fought against have not always been military and external. They have been political, economic, social, and religious. Some of the worst of them have been the handiwork of Americans. Whatever the category or the source, there has never been a totalitarian threat to America which, sooner or later, did not meet an authentic American challenge. What we have of civilization in the United States is chiefly a consequence of the success we have had in those encounters.

One of the first of them was in mid-seventeenth century Massachusetts. The axis which ran Massachusetts at that time had the church at one—the upper—end of it and the state at the other. This alliance was busily turning the Bay Colony into a first-rate New World dictatorship. The civil magistrates enforced the preachers' moral and ecclesiastical laws and the preachers, in their turn, made support for the civil authority one of the first of their religious tenets. Between that upper and nether pressure, freedom of conscience—in either religious or civil matters—was effectively suppressed.

On the horizon of this totalitarian setup, in the winter of 1631, there appeared a cloud—no bigger than the size of a man's hand. On February 5th, the ship *Lyon*, with twenty arriving colonists and two hundred tons of goods, dropped anchor off Nantasket. To cele-

brate the event, the General Court did what—if it had had foreknowledge of the troublesome cargo which the *Lyon* carried—it would never have agreed to. It proclaimed a day of thanksgiving.

Most honored of the arrivals on that occasion were one Roger Williams—a preacher—and his wife, Mary. Preachers, in those days, were likely to be singled out. The church was the most important social institution and the only community center. Religion, at least for the respectable and ruling majority, was the only diversion—albeit an exceedingly dour and excessively theological one. The pulpit was a throne and the man who stood there was as far above the run-of-the-mill worshipers as the place he stood—in those New England churches—was above their pews.

The colony's dictators should have known what manner of man they were honoring when they honored Roger Williams. In fact, the reasons for his coming to the New World in the first place should have forewarned them. He came because he had run afoul, in England, of exactly the same authorities which he soon ran afoul of in Massachusetts. And, being stiff-necked, unrepentant and unsilenced, England was made too hot for him. So, before long, was Massachusetts.

But, though he lost a good many battles and frequently had to retreat, Williams won the war. It is in considerable part to preserve the fruit of his victory in

that war that the United States is now engaged in this one.

Roger Williams was not born to the role of prophet. His father was a prosperous member of London's middle-bracket gentry—a trader. Life was comfortable. But yeast was at work in England and young Williams was reached by the ferment. At an early age he was converted to Puritanism. His faith was shaped by the literature of Puritanism and from the recently translated King James version of the Bible.

The Puritan faith had in it two basic convictions which—in a world such as that world was—were sooner or later bound to make trouble. These convictions were sometimes violated. But they were never abandoned. The first of them put man—the individual—at the center of things. The Puritan was a Nonconformist—because he believed himself to be important enough to do his own thinking. For the same reason he was not a sort that could easily be pushed around. The second item in the Puritan faith was the belief that—desirable as heaven may be—religion has certain obligations in regard to earthly improvements. In a society in which tyranny was still widespread, that mixture of self-confidence and a passion to do something about it was highly combustible.

Roger Williams was one of those ignited. To prepare for the ministry, he went to Cambridge. By the time he had finished at Cambridge, the reactionary party in the Church of England—in a last desperate fight for its life—had found a leader in the person of a

certain Bishop Laud. Laud noted with glaring disapproval young Williams's liberal, nonconforming ideas and promptly saw to it that the roads to ecclesiastical employment were blocked. Williams served, for a short time, as chaplain in the home of a wealthy Puritan trader. But Laud threatened him even there and, convinced that no Christian purpose would be served by having his ears cropped off in the pillory, Williams and his wife fled, via the *Lyon*, to what he believed were the greater freedoms of the New World.

He arrived in Boston just in time to have the best ministerial plum in the colony fall into his lap. The pulpit in Boston was vacant and Williams was invited to accept it. As a precautionary measure he called the lay leaders of the church into session with him. There is no record of what went on at that meeting. But Williams, apparently, did all the questioning. What he evidently found out was that this church was an important part of the church-state axis that was running the colony. It was to escape from that kind of regimentation that he had left England. He promptly told the brethren—he always managed to couch his disruptive conclusions in brotherly language—that he would have none of them or their job. His refusal caused a major scandal and no little uneasiness in the upper reaches of authority.

Soon thereafter he left Boston altogether and went to Salem; the church there was much smaller. But the people were farther removed from the seat of the governing theocracy. As a result, the air was more con-

ductive to that freedom of conscience without which Williams found the breathing difficult.

But all was far from smooth going in Salem. Ambitious clergymen of the community proposed regular meetings to discuss and agree upon matters of morals, of religion, and not incidentally, of government. Before he knew it, Williams was in the middle of another controversy. He openly opposed such sessions. He did not oppose them because he had no liking for his professional colleagues. All through his life he was notably friendly. He opposed the meetings because, with a knowledge born of experience, he was convinced that another church-state dictatorship was in the making.

Salem, or at least its ruling conservatives, did not like this show of independence. And Williams, soon, decided that he did not like Salem. Whereupon he was forced to retreat again—this time to Plymouth.

Plymouth—the first Bay settlement—appears to have kept alive more of the spirit of the Mayflower Compact than any other community in the Bay Colony. William Bradford, still the governor, and Elder Brewster were its two leading citizens. Boston's icy influence hardly reached it.

Moreover, in Plymouth, Williams—although he preached on Sundays—entered into a sizable trade with the Indians during the week. His commercial parentage stood him in good stead and he prospered. He spent much time with the Indians and learned their language.



He did so well and made so considerable a name for himself that, to what must have been his surprise, he was invited back to a church in Salem. He went. And being once again near the center of things, the authorities soon realized that they had a fight on their hands.

For Williams was a powerful speaker. He was learned in English law and literature—as well as in matters of theology. Moreover, the liberalizing tides that were running in England had begun to wash against the shores of the New World. Average men and women—the common people—were increasingly resentful of the regimentation to which they were subjected. Williams, therefore, soon had a following.

What he preached were principles which—written into our laws and practices—have long since become taken-for-granted American doctrine. It had theological, political, and economic meaning. The colonists—being blessed with guns and gunpowder—made it a practice, whenever it suited their fancy, to take lands from the Indians without troubling to pay for them. Williams stood up in meeting and condemned the practice and those who practiced it. The grant from the king to colonize, said Williams, did not include the right to steal from the natives.

The full effect of that blast was just being appraised when Williams loosed another. This one concerned the oath of allegiance. In order to make its dictatorship more secure, the General Court had decreed that all freemen swear allegiance to and unreserved

acceptance of the dictates of that ruling body. Williams insisted that men's oaths be reserved for religious matters and that the rulings of the General Court be subjected to the same critical scrutiny as any other man-made, and therefore fallible, instruments.

Most of all, and in season and out, Williams kept pounding away against the effort to pour the free wills and consciences of the people into a mold prepared by the authorities.

The law required that all magistrates be church members. Williams, instead of trying to get church members, insisted that the officials should bend their efforts toward getting good magistrates. "Civil places of trust and credit," he said, "need not be monopolized into the hands of church-members (who sometimes are not fitted for them) and all others deprived and despoiled of their Natural and Civil Rights and Liberties." That was a bomb at the base of one of the biggest pillars of the status quo.

Moreover, said he, the civil authority has no right to take over the conscience of the people. "I affirm it lamentably to be against the Testimony of Jesus Christ for the civil state to impose upon the souls of the people a religion, a worship, a ministry, oaths, tithes, times, days, marryings and buryings in holy ground." On the contrary—and here the American pattern again appears—the state should give "free and absolute permission of conscience to all men in what is merely spiritual . . . and provide for the liberty of

the magistrate's conscience also." That was more than a hundred years before the Bill of Rights!

He hated totalitarianism and all its works. "Persecutors of men's bodies seldom or never do these men's souls good. . . . That body-killing, soul-killing and state-killing doctrine of not permitting but persecuting all other consciences and ways of worship" but their own is "to pluck up the roots and foundations of all common society in the world, to turn the garden of paradise of the church and saints into a field of the civil state of the world . . . to blow out the candle or light and to make a noise in the dark with a sound and cry of a guilty land, a guilty state."

That was more than the dictators could put up with. The whole country of America, Cotton Mather wrote, is "like to be set on fire by the rapid motion of a windmill in the head of one particular man." The man, the General Court decided, would have to be got rid of. Roger Williams was given six weeks—later a little extended—in which to get out of the Bay Colony altogether.

That was the spring of 1636. The first place in the peripheral wilderness which the exiled Williams selected was too close for comfort to Plymouth. Its governors—suddenly fearful lest they give offense to Boston—asked him to move on. With his wife and her infant—whom they had christened "Freeborne" he moved.

The place he chose—across the bay—he named Providence. There, on land given him by a friendly

Narragansett chief, he and the five young men who chose to share his exile cleared the wilderness, planted a crop, built a house, and began to lay the foundations for an authentic American commonwealth.

It was a commonwealth hewn—not only from the forests—but, more importantly, from Williams's own mind. Into it went the freedoms which he had fervently preached all his life—first against Bishop Laud and later against the authoritarians of the New World. It was a state built in the likeness of the America that was to be.

Providence and the settlement that grew around it became a Promised Land for dissenters. Anne Hutchinson—likewise banished from Massachusetts—found refuge there. So did many nonconforming Baptists. The law of the settlement—lenient as it was in the matter of conscience—was stringent in the matter of diligence. As a result of this industry and of Williams's shrewd bargaining with the Dutch and his friendly relations with the Indians, the colony prospered. Massachusetts eyed its prosperity with considerable envy. Williams, however, forestalled any move from that direction by going to England and securing from the king a charter for his colony.

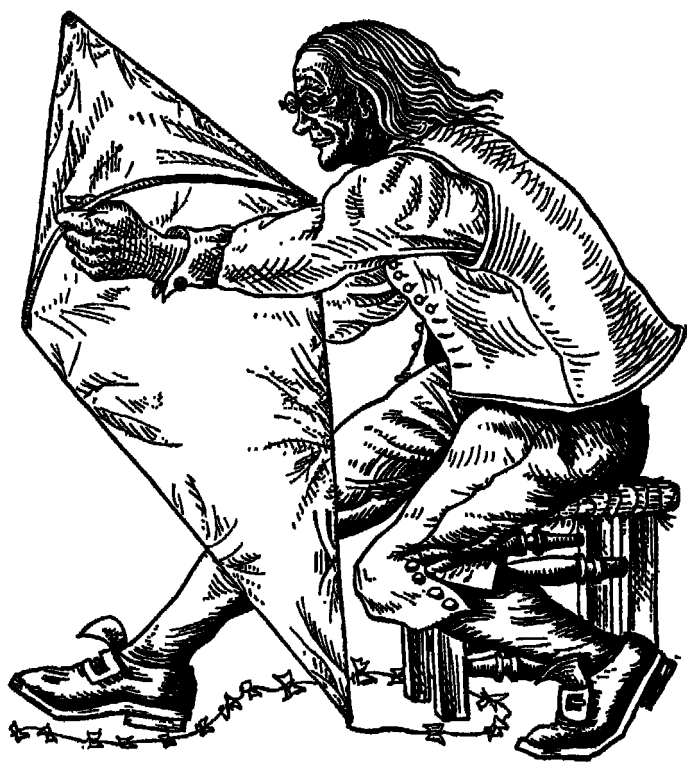
But even in this colony—his own handiwork—Roger Williams never got to the place where the going was easy. That was because he never failed to understand that the New World—vast as it was—was too small to house both freedom and totalitarianism. Sooner or later, it would have to be all one or all the

other. Down to his death, he joyfully accepted every opportunity that came his way to combat the latter so that the former might be established.

He fought for freedom among the weak-willed, the appeasers, and the ambitious saboteurs among his own colonists. He continued to fight for it against the Massachusetts axis. When a wave of persecution was unloosed there, he risked his life and the security of his colony to oppose it.

The chronicle of many of his activities is entered in the town record of Providence. The final item there concerns his intercession to secure justice for a woman who—living where she had no technical property right—had been ordered to leave the community.

His death is recorded in the spring of 1683. At the end of that page someone has written: "The Venerable Remains of Mr. Roger Williams, the Father of Providence, the Founder of the Colony and of Liberty of Conscience." Someone now might add: "and one of those First Americans with whose vision for America the Americans of 1942 are keeping faith."



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

# Benjamin Franklin

1706-1790

by

Carl Van Doren



NY GREAT AMERICAN IS ONE OF America's national resources, and to cherish his memory is to make continuing use of his greatness. Even though his example may from time to time seem to have grown dim, it is still there, ready to be drawn upon like forests and mines and wells, farms and rivers and the ocean. In dark days he can be trusted to be a light out of the past, if he is remembered for what he really was and still remains.

Let us remember some of the things too many of us have forgotten about Benjamin Franklin, the earliest great American.

When Washington was only twenty-one, Adams eighteen, Jefferson ten, Madison two, and Hamilton not yet born, Franklin in 1753 was already a scientist

of world-wide renown. His discoveries in electricity had laid the foundations of that science. His experiments with lightning, and his invention of the lightning rod, had begun to make him thought of, by the people everywhere, as a kind of wizard. Had he not hit upon a secret which enabled him to catch and tame a terrible force which mankind had superstitiously dreaded for thousands of years? Here was another hero of the human race.

But Franklin was no wizard hid in a cave. He was also a humorist and wit. He had created the character of Poor Richard the year Washington was born, and had ever since gone on annually turning the world's proverbs into Poor Richard's sayings, with a new American point and flavor. Probably no man since Solomon has given so many proverbs the form in which they are most familiarly known as Franklin gave.

Scientist and humorist, Franklin was also the leader among the men who were changing Philadelphia from a little provincial town into the most important city in the American colonies and one of the important cities in the British Empire. In 1753 he became postmaster general for North America and the next year drew up his plan for a union of the colonies which was to be, as it turned out, a forecast of the United States.

Franklin at first had no thought of independence. He desired only to unite the colonies in local affairs within the larger frame of imperial government. His vision for the future included both sides of the At-



lantic. If America depended on Great Britain, so did Great Britain depend on America. Together they might, he wrote a little later, set up "the greatest political structure human wisdom ever yet erected."

For eighteen years before 1775 Franklin spent most of his time in London as agent of various colonies and, in effect, ambassador from America. Firmly holding out for justice to his native country, he was also faithful to his imperial vision. Justice to America, he knew, was in the long run a necessity for the whole empire. What he proposed was substantially what was long afterward to be the basic principle of the British Commonwealth of Nations. But the reactionary George III and his obedient ministers were not prophets. Franklin's plans were disregarded, and he was insultingly dismissed from office.

During his voyage home the battles of Lexington and Concord took place and the colonies flared into rebellion. This was something Franklin had feared and had done his best to prevent. He might, like most former crown officers in America, have sided with the king. He might have stubbornly persisted in his plans for reconciliation. He might, at seventy, have withdrawn from the conflict and returned to the scientific studies which had made him famous. Instead, he took his seat in the Continental Congress, the oldest man in it, and thereafter gave his massive energies to the defense of America and to American independence.

The only member of the Congress who had a large European reputation, Franklin was sent to Paris

to try to win France as an ally. There his triumph was due perhaps less to what he did than to what he was. For to the French, as to all the rest of Europe outside of England, he was not merely a shrewd diplomat working against many odds. He was a great sage, wise and good and smiling, who spoke for the new nation of Americans because he was so completely one of them while being a citizen of the world. If America could produce a great philosopher it was not, as it was represented by its enemies, a noisy rabble in a wilderness.

Franklin with his outward ease and grace, Washington with his unmistakable gravity and fortitude in America: these were, without question, the two masters of the Revolution, each with the qualities supremely needed in his place. What they had in common was the deep stamina which for eight years kept them from giving up a cause that often looked hopeless. Probably every day of the war Washington wished he were back on his farm, Franklin that he were back at his experiments. Each of them for the sake of his country had turned away from what he liked and valued most in private life. But there they stood, throughout the long struggle, like the towers or temples of an unshakable faith.

When Franklin at eighty left Paris for America he looked forward to a philosopher's retirement. But almost at once he was elected president (governor) of Pennsylvania, and he was inevitably a delegate to the federal convention which formed the Constitution of the United States. His temperate wisdom kept the con-

vention from breaking up into antagonistic parties. The finished Constitution was not altogether what he wished it to be, but without him there might have been no constitution at all.

Too old and feeble to be considered for first president, Franklin lived only long enough to see the first few months of the new government he had done so much to bring into existence and to shape. Then, like Moses on Pisgah, he looked into the Promised Land which his people were to enter and enjoy. In one of his last letters he summed up what amounts to his blessing on this government and every good government.

"God grant that not only the love of liberty but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man may pervade all the nations of the earth, so that a philosopher may set his foot anywhere on its surface and say: 'This is my country.' "

What survives from Franklin's life and work a century and a half after his death? There are, of course, the bequests to Boston and Philadelphia which have grown into the most munificent money gifts ever made by a philosopher. There are the library, the hospital, the fire insurance company, the scientific society, the academy (eventually the university) which he helped found in Philadelphia. His autobiography has been more widely read than any other and has been translated into every language that has a printing press. The stove he invented bears his name, and the lightning rod is forever associated with it. He organized

the United States postal service and instituted the dead-letter office.

Things not so well known are that he was the first notable American athlete, published the first foreign-language newspaper in America, planned the first American magazine, made the original observations out of which the weather bureau developed, drew and printed the first American cartoon, invented a draft for fireplaces and was a pioneer in the science of ventilation, was the first scholar to study the Gulf Stream, saw the first men go up in a free balloon and was first to prophesy that war might be made from the air, and received the first letter carried through the air, by balloon from London to Paris. The oldest of the great Americans of the Revolution, he saw furthest into the future.

Among great American statesmen Franklin is the only one who has a great name in science, the only one who wrote a book that belongs to world literature, the only one who was equally at home in America, England, and France: at once intensely native and perfectly cosmopolitan.

Far from sinking out of sight as time passes, Franklin steadily emerges, like a mountain which seemed no higher than others when we were close to them but which as we move away rises above them all. And yet there is nothing overpowering in Franklin's eminence. The more we learn about him, and the more we wonder at him, the more also we take a comfortable delight in his serenity and good humor and candor and

charm. We are proud to belong to the nation that produced him. We honor his talents and achievements. But we feel that the man was more than his works, and that while his works have spread out into the broad stream of American life, the man has somehow managed to outlast them all, still himself, still a delightful friend as well as a mighty hero.



# Lew Wallace.

1827-1905

by

Booth Tarkington

DANIEL WEBSTER SAID, "AMERICA HAS FURNISHED TO THE world the character of Washington. And if our American institutions had done nothing else, that alone would have entitled them to the respect of mankind." There are two rather startling words in this admirable statement—"character" and "respect"; both have been scantily existent in our national consciousness during what have been called the rioting twenties and the dirty thirties. We have let "personality" serve us for

"character," and as for "respect" we've not even needed to find a cheaper, less respectable word with which to sell its meaning short. Danger is sobering, however, and so today, suddenly and hugely sobered, we emerge from spree and hangover and seek to become realists overnight. What have we got—what belongs to us—that we can respect? we ask; for be sure the twitching slave of cynicism, the nervous creature who respects nothing (and, usually, fears everything) cannot survive—and small loss if he doesn't.

To begin with, all Americans own the character of George Washington and can with heart and mind respect it, for neither the debunking nor the beglamouring legends accruing upon the fame of our First President have hurt the superb truth of him. There are many other Americans, living or, alas, dead, widely or too meagerly known, whose characters are richly worth the consideration of a people in search of enduring mental, moral, and physical strength; and it is well for us to gain and cherish knowledge of our great and good men, not so that we may brag of them as pertaining to us and strut a moment in reflected light, not in order that we may strive to imitate them, for imitations are fruitless, but because by consciously valuing what is valuable we must inevitably be the wiser personally and at the same time compose the form and quality of our national character. What a nation respects comes close to being what a nation is.

In his lifetime Lewis Wallace—General Lew Wallace—of Indiana had the admiration and respect of his

fellow countrymen, of most of the wide world's literate inhabitants, indeed, and it is creditable to his day that this was so. It can be both creditable and useful to us of this day to recollect Lew Wallace. Why? With our minds exposed, by radio, to such a multitude of informations as never before beat upon human brain cells with variety and persistence, how can we afford room in our heads for Lew Wallace? Is what he did really worth our overburdened attention? Let us see.

Is he important to us now in 1942 because in 1843, when he was only seventeen years old and already entirely on his own, earning his living, he began to write at night a historical romance, *The Fair God*, about the Spanish conquest of Mexico? Or because, an ardent boy of nineteen, he joined up for our war with Mexico, in which he saw no action? Should we know about him because he made himself into a fine lawyer, or because, being a Democrat and having a horror of civil war, he yet was convinced by Abraham Lincoln, and fought bravely and well on the northern side in our War for the Union? Beginning as colonel of the 11th Regiment of Indiana Volunteers, he was almost instantly promoted to brigadier general; but need we know this or that he commanded a division in the taking of Fort Donelson and then was made a major general? Need we care now because he suffered the unhappiness—through a series of mischances not his fault—of coming up a day late for the battle of Shiloh?

Subsequently General Lew Wallace saved Cincinnati from capture, and also, with courageous fore-



sight and although many times outnumbered (twenty-five hundred men against some twenty thousand!) he provoked the delaying battle of Monocacy and thus saved Washington itself from the Confederate army under Jubal Early. These were important deeds; but, with so much on our minds as we have now, ought we to trouble ourselves to continue to honor them and is it our duty to be informed that the hero of them was an excellent governor of New Mexico from 1878 to 1881 and then was an illustriously capable United States minister to Turkey? Most of us already do know, though not now with excited interest, that Lew Wallace wrote *Ben-Hur*—a book prodigiously read during more than half a century; must we also be aware that he wrote *The Boyhood of Christ*, *The Prince of India*, and a life of Benjamin Harrison? Perhaps it is important that more of us should know that he wrote his autobiography, which isn't read today but most emphatically should be. On the whole, however, the vital statistics of General Lew Wallace's life need not gravely concern anyone not a specialist in American history. Acts of his may have somewhat altered the course of that history for the better; but so may the acts of millions of other men, and few of us can enjoy the luxury of speculation upon an infinite series of had-it-been-otherwise.

It is, then, Lew Wallace's character to which it will be invigorating for us to pay our respects. I was a child of ten when I first saw the general. My father and I were standing together in the street before a

newspaper office building in Indianapolis, watching election bulletins, when suddenly Father's face lit up, as we say, and he exclaimed, "General Wallacel General Wallace, this is my boy, Booth." The general shook my hand, no doubt a limp one, for I was a little frightened: he was so soldierly and his eyes were so keen, so militarily examining. I can see the picture of him still, for some visual memories stay fixed in clarity. He was getting gray then; but he had peculiarly that eagle look belonging to men of action who are men of brain and heart besides, and age would increase, not diminish the unaffected moral grandeur of his being and his bearing. He frightened me; but there was something reassuring about him too, and I felt then, correctly, a little explosion of pride within me that General Lew Wallace and my father and I were fellow citizens of the same United States.

Not long ago as mundane time is measured, Mr. James Hilton, referring to the League of Nations, wrote: "It is sickening now of the deadliest of modern diseases—popular approval without private faith." Today we may justly apply this diagnosis to ourselves, for the United States of America is at this moment not entirely free of a like infection—as a whole the country approves the ugly necessity of war against the Axis aggressors; but what of our "private faiths?" General Wallace and other manly men of his generation were untainted by such sick disintegrations; their simple rectitude made it impossible for them to suppose that a man of any character whatever could hold an opinion

upon serious public affairs that he wasn't willing to back up with his life if need be.

It was as simple as that to them; and let us not presume to think their simplicity stupid. Have our sophistications concerning the "futility of war" been productive of so much in the way of peace?

Lew Wallace—who was not a professional soldier, be it remembered (though he was indeed a "born" one)—gives us an honest history of his attitude toward war. When he was a boy it was primitively romantic. "Denial and qualification aside," he writes, "I was hungry for war. Had I not been reading about it all my life? And had not all I had read about it wrought in me that battle was the climax of the sublime and terrible, and that without at least one experience of the kind no life could be perfect?" When he went off to the Mexican War his father bade him farewell. "The moment came for me to climb into the wagon . . . he took my hand and said: 'Good-bye. Come back a man.' Suddenly I gave him a shower of tears."

Lew Wallace came back a man, and a brave one because, although he did not experience battle, he did fear. He had an adventure alone one night; it's unimportant in itself but it enabled him later to write thus: "The sight of a child in fear always stops me now with quick appeal—since that night . . . because no one knows better than I how blind and unreasoning panic is." There speaks the true soldier. No really stanch and seasoned warrior of intelligence denies fear; he learns to handle it in himself and others—as did Gen-

eral Wallace before Fort Donelson: "Then, in a jiffy, the bellows of the guns were upon us, followed by puffs of pallid smoke and sharp explosions in the air overhead. . . . The space to be crossed before reaching cover was three or four hundred yards; seeing which some one suggested double-quicking; instead of that I sent word to Colonel Cruft to set all his drums and fifes going, my argument being that the double-quick would soon degenerate into a run, while inspiring contempt of shells in the beginning was better than demoralizing the men with fear of them. The music began, and the stiffening up was magical."

Other wars, other manners, and good sense must take protean forms; but wherever and whenever educated courage liberates the operation of good sense mankind stands a little higher, by so much becomes less of a slave to circumstances.

Lew Wallace said, "I thanked God for the law that makes war impossible as a lasting condition, however it inspires the loves and memories of comradeship, and teaches that each succeeding generation of freemen are as brave as their ancestors."

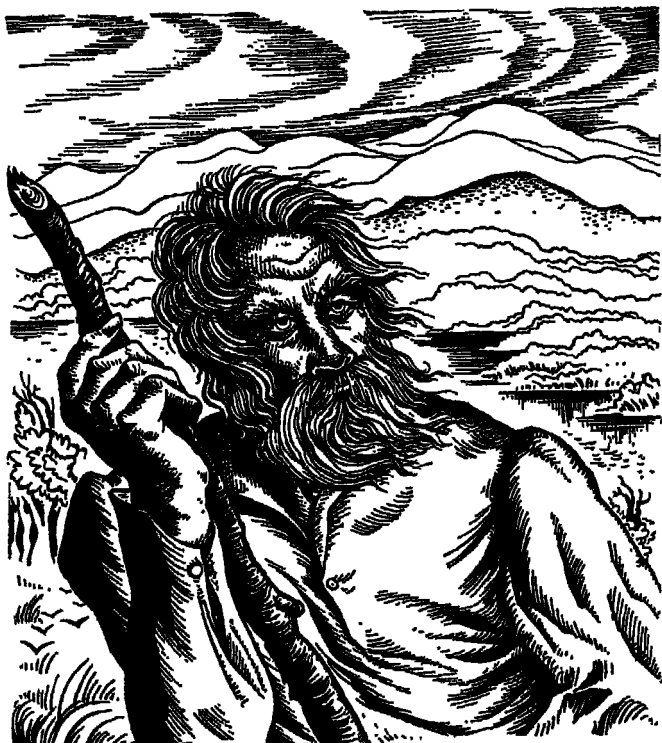
In 1894, addressing a graduating class of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, he said, "I have not committed myself . . . to the assertion that there will be no more wars; that would be an Arcadian dream. . . . There is no end to the greed of nations, and the Pacific coast from Alaska to the Horn, and the Atlantic coast from the Horn to Halifax bear temptations more frequent than light-houses. . . . The next ship from

Honolulu may bring a cause of war; and, for that matter, the Nicaragua Canal, though but in proposition, is a nest-egg of war. . . . Undoubtedly hostilities will come; they are inevitable. . . . *Mira*, young gentlemen, behold your opportunities!"

Today we embrace the dream General Lew Wallace called "Arcadian"; we challenge the inevitability of everlasting successions of wars; we dimly foresee the possibility of justice and liberty made so widely available that outlawed war must eventually be forced to become obsolete. Can this happen anywhere under Jap or Nazi tyranny? If echo answers yes, it's no echo from Lew Wallace's strong voice.

Here is an echo from the voice of that stout realist, who was also a reverent student of Christianity: "I know nothing more honorable, nothing greater, in fact, than going down in the bitter waters of defeat—holding victory overhead."

Going down in the 'bitter waters of defeat is what America has been doing in these the opening months of her greatest war; but this very descent has been indeed great and honorable. Those who perished and we who survive have seen Victory forever overhead.



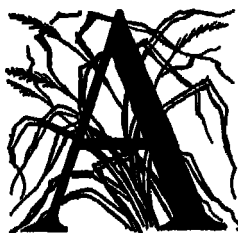
WALT WHITMAN

# Walt Whitman

1819-1892

by

Mark Van Doren



GREAT POET ONCE LOVED AMERICA with such passion that the whole of it was constantly before his eyes. And what he could not see of it he heard; and what he could not hear of it he touched. Walt Whitman's delight in his country was so enormous and so simple that he could not bear the thought of its absence from him. This is why his poems are so full of the names of things: of rivers, of states, of cities and tools and occupations. He is always itemizing his love, calling it by its myriad titles, bringing it home to his senses so that it shall not escape him and grow cool. No man ever loved his land at closer range, or ever said so more eloquently.

All of it was about him all the time. He possessed in supreme degree the power of pausing and listening

to the great life beyond oneself. At this moment, now, his poems seem to say, while I, Walt Whitman, sit in my Brooklyn boardinghouse or stand at the prow of a ferry which is puffing toward Manhattan, a woodsman in Michigan is lifting his ax; an engineer along the Mohawk is peering at his gauges; a slave in the rice fields is bending over his sack; clerks are hurrying to their offices in St. Louis; an officer is barking commands at his soldiers on the Indian frontier; Indians are slipping their fishing canoes into the northwestern waters; a man is bringing meat home in brown paper; a baby is going to sleep in its mother's arms; lovers are strolling; an old woman is dying in an Allegheny cabin; factories are smoking, whistles are getting ready to blow, the rivers are rushing through their valleys, the fish are quiet in their pools, an eagle is measuring the Rocky Mountains with its wing, and the philosopher is frowning at his desk. Walt Whitman himself was by trade a newspaperman in Brooklyn and New York, nor was he particularly successful at his trade. But his calling was wider. It was the breathing and beautiful earth, whose manifold realities he slowly fashioned into an original kind of poetry to celebrate. *Leaves of Grass* in its various editions, from the first in 1855 to the last which he saw through the press in 1891-1892, is the testament of his love; and it is a book through which Americans have continued to feel, hear, see, touch, and smell their country, and to find it good.

*Leaves of Grass* enriches our landscape and deepens its tone. In a sense it has created the world



in which Americans are aware of being alive. And this world is primarily human. Sensitive as Whitman was to the genius of place, he was still more sensitive to the species man. The bodies of young men bathing, the runner leaning forward, the miner with his sooty cap, the ox tamer, the tiller of tobacco fields, the book-keeper, the oarsman, the statesman—all these and more he must keep with him as the companions of his thought. It is almost as if he were jealous of their absence, as if he felt a fierce determination to hold them here. They literally intoxicate him, as the land does, with their nearness and yet their strangeness. For the things and persons Whitman describes are fabulous at the same time that they are familiar. This is America. It is, however, an extraordinary America, a land of superdimensions, a place *Leaves of Grass* brings us back to after an ideal journey elsewhere. It is the same, but better. It is our own, and more. It is perfectly itself.

But the Civil War came to Whitman's America, and it was his "mighty privilege" to live through that terrible time. Terrible as the experience was to him, he did not miss its grandeur. "In my judgment," he wrote after it was over, in the autobiographical work called *Specimen Days*, "it will remain as the most encouraging spectacle in any age, old or new, to political progress and democracy. . . . It is the best lesson of the century." The awakening of the general will, the prosecution of a huge social task, and then the peaceful surrender of animosities once they could serve no

further purpose: these things moved him not only to his best poems, culminating in 1865 with his hymn for Lincoln, "When Lilacs Last in the Door-Yard Bloom'd," but to his best efforts as a man.

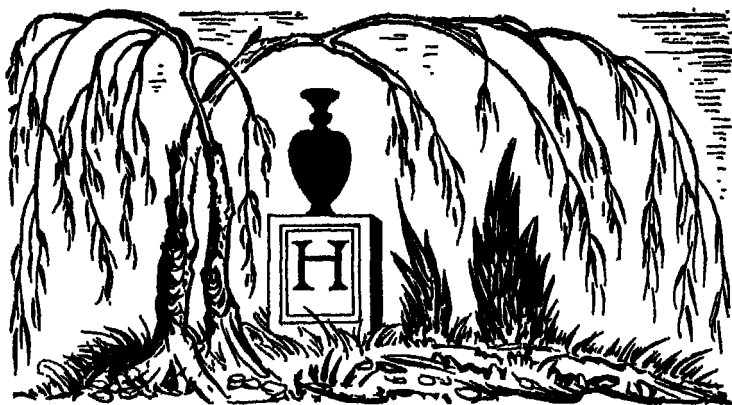
Whitman's part in the Civil War was not as soldier but as nurse. Hearing in 1862 that his brother George had been wounded in Virginia, he hastened there from Brooklyn and found him at Falmouth, where for the first time he saw great numbers of maimed men in the field. He had written newspaper articles about a New York hospital, but this was different and it was worse. The sight determined the rest of his life. He went as soon as he could to Washington and began the hospital rounds which kept him busy until 1865 and which, he believed, cost him his health; for he attributed his later paralysis to infection from the fever and gangrene he was never far away from through three years. His *Memoranda* dealing with these days spare the reader no ghastly detail of pain and death, nor did Whitman ever minimize the horrors he witnessed. But the story is chiefly of one who went among the hurt and the dying with a cheerful voice and a friendly hand; who brought comfort also in the form of oranges, jellies, sweet cookies, books and magazines to read, pipes and tobacco, and above all paper on which letters could be written home. When the soldier was too weak to write, Whitman did it for him; or from a collection he had raised in the cities of New England he gave small sums of money to men whose dignity this would restore.

"During those three years in hospital, camp, or field," he writes, "I made over six hundred visits or tours, and went, as I estimate, counting all, among from eighty thousand to a hundred thousand of the wounded and sick. These visits varied from an hour or two to all day or night; for with dear or critical cases I generally watched all night. . . . Those three years I consider the greatest privilege and satisfaction, and of course the most profound lesson, of my life." The Civil War, in other words, was not lost on the author of *Leaves of Grass*. If his bodily strength declined thereafter, his art gained in purity and strength; and though he continued to make America the subject of his poems, the emphasis changed. He described less and interpreted more. He ceased to accept everything at its present value; indeed, both in prose and in verse he underlined the limitations of postwar America. For it was now the ideal, or future, America that occupied his imagination.

And since he was rigorously ideal he could be unhesitatingly critical. His *Democratic Vistas* (1871) contains some of the most penetrating strictures ever passed upon American morals and manners. He could speak thus because he had no doubt of his basic principle, and because he was that most valuable kind of democrat, the kind who insists at all times upon speaking the truth. Democracy is never served by those who flatter it. Its best lovers know its faults and ask in a firm voice that they be corrected. So with Whitman, whose later poems are far different from his first ones.

They are mellow and wiser, and put less stress upon the uniqueness of America, not to say its isolation. The future of the country includes for him now an intellectual and spiritual free trade with the rest of the world, both past and present: with the ripest ancient cultures, which once he had repudiated, and with the best that was being thought and said in contemporary Europe. Walt Whitman's love of America had become mature.

Early or late, however, his poems have a wonderful power to brighten as with dew the features of our land. Whether he is cataloguing facts or revealing their import, whether he is shouting loudly or singing well, he is seldom without this power, which no one has had in like degree. "Night of south winds! night of the large few stars!" "I am he that walks with the tender and growing night." "I loaf and invite my soul." "I am large—I contain multitudes." "Give me the splendid silent sun." "Affection shall solve the problems of Freedom yet; those who love each other shall become invincible." He could make such phrases as those, and they signify another power, another genius. Nor does the word "America" appear anywhere among them. For the final truth about Whitman is that he loved mankind even more than he loved America, the world even more than his continent. This is why his feeling for home can be so sure and strong. The world begins at home and comes around to it again. So with Walt Whitman, whose muse returned to her first love, America, without illusion and without loss.



# Alexander Hamilton

1757-1804

by

Lyman Bryson

HAMILTON STOOD WITH HIS PISTOL DOWN AT HIS SIDE AS he faced the man, a few steps away, who had sworn to kill him. He was thinking, perhaps, of his eldest son, shot in another duel a year before on that same Hudson River Bluff. He paid no attention to the signal to fire. He took Burr's well-aimed bullet in his breast and died the day after, July 12, 1804. He had accepted Burr's challenge because in those days a man could not hope to stay in politics if he refused to fight. He

was forty-seven years old. He was risking his life deliberately for his country. Few men in history have been better loved or better hated. And few have been so much misunderstood.

You have to look at the chief events in his short and ardent life before you can understand the contrasts in his character. And you have to discount party prejudices because we are still arguing, in 1942, the same issues that arose in Washington's first Cabinet when Hamilton, secretary of the treasury, spoke for a strong central government, while Thomas Jefferson, secretary of state, argued for states' rights and the least possible government interference in men's lives. The dispute between them is really a statement of the balance that makes democracy work, a balanced conflict between freedom, which seemed to Jefferson most important, and the national strength and stability, which Hamilton worked for.

Men tried to discredit Hamilton by calling him the advocate of the rich, although he was never a rich owner of plantations and slaves as was Jefferson himself. They said he distrusted democracy, which may have been true. He had in him almost nothing of the politician and nothing at all of the demagogue. He wanted above all a strong American nation.

Hamilton's life is a typical American success story, of the poor boy who made good, like Lincoln or Garfield or any hero of fiction. When they called him an aristocrat, he may have remembered with some bitterness that he did not have even a legitimate family

name and that he had been making his own way since the age of twelve. He was orphaned and penniless and it was his brilliant promise that led some of his mother's relatives to help when he left his apprenticeship in the island of Nevis, West Indies, where he was born, and went to New York for an education and a start.

He studied at Columbia College (then King's) and threw himself into the Revolution and at twenty was colonel and secretary to General Washington. From then on he was always Washington's closest adviser until the general's death. Washington was huge and silent and majestic. His young aide was a small man, brilliant, voluble, impatient. They must have made a striking contrast when they worked together, not always in harmony but with a deep mutual understanding.

Hamilton died at Weehawken because he had blocked Burr's almost successful attempt to be president of the United States. More than that, he was risking his whole political career because in blocking Burr he was putting Jefferson into the presidency. He opposed Jefferson's ideas but he knew the Virginian was an honest man and a patriot. He preferred to see his own bitterest opponent in power rather than to see his country in the hands of an adventurer.

That whole transaction was typical of him. He always put his country first. When the Revolution was over, he saw clearly that the Articles of Confederation

could not hold the thirteen colonies together in national unity. He fought for a real constitution. Nobody would listen to him at the Constitutional Convention because they thought he wanted a government like the parliamentary system of England. But when the basic law was written, although it contained very little of what he wanted, he did two things. He made the fight, more effectively than anyone else could do, to get the new constitution accepted by the states and then in his writings and as a member of Washington's administration he set in motion the ideas that have controlled most of our constitutional development ever since.

He wrote, with Madison and Jay, but doing more than half of them himself, *The Federalist*, a series of letters to the New York newspapers, arguing for and explaining the new constitution. *The Federalist* is the great classic of American political thinking and one of the first books of statesmanship in any language. Hamilton may not have trusted democracy but he respected the people because he offered them in those brief, solid, eloquent essays the best thinking that any man in America could do and trusted them to act on principle for the good of their country. He did not like the Constitution as it was drafted but it was a possible plan for the future and he was willing to support the best plan in sight. This is very much as if Henry Cabot Lodge and Senator Borah, in 1920, had tried to persuade the people to accept Woodrow Wil-

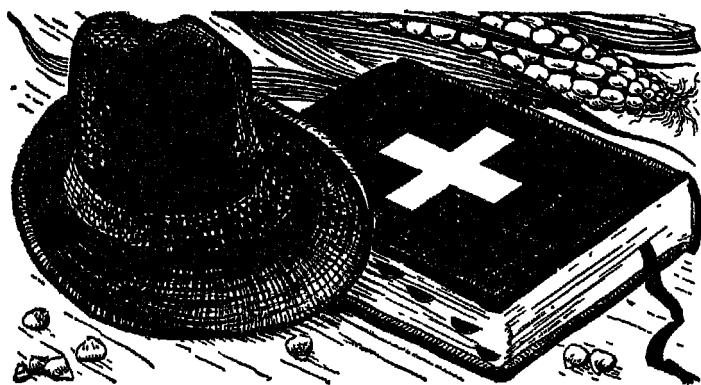


son's League of Nations. To Hamilton a political victory was never so important as the good of America.

When the new government was set up and Washington became the first president, Hamilton took the most difficult task in the Cabinet. He was secretary of the treasury and, in spite of fierce and ignorant opposition from some of his colleagues, he put the new nation on a business basis. He repudiated the economic doctrine of laissez-faire, which now after a century and a half we are all questioning, and established our system of government encouragement for industry and trade. The unity of the thirteen colonies was achieved in spite of what seem to us now to have been very foolish state jealousies. They tried to be thirteen separate nations but found themselves, at last, one nation. But they were not persuaded by Hamilton's arguments for national unity. It was the quiet agency of business, of commerce between regions and with foreign countries, established in great part by Hamilton's work, that brought a commercial nation into being before a nation fully conscious of its common ideals was possible.

The greatest thing in Hamilton, after his devotion to his country, was his clear and powerful mind. No other man in our public history ever brought the same power of thought to bear on our national problems. In Washington's messages and state papers, including the Farewell Address, in the earliest interpretation of the Constitution and its progress since, in our economic system, his words and ideas have been

factors of strength. He helped as much as any man to make America. In that no one can imitate him now but we can all imitate his devotion, his clear and passionate sense of duty to the limits of our strength.



# William Jennings Bryan

1860-1925

by

Henry Commager

TOWARD THE END OF HIS LIFE—A LIFE FILLED WITH great disappointments and greater achievements—William Jennings Bryan sat down to write his Memoirs. Unhesitatingly, he began:

I was born in the greatest of all ages. I was born a member of the greatest of all races. I was born a citizen of the greatest of all lands. It was a gift of priceless value to see the light in beloved America, and to live under the greatest of the republics of history.

And he meant it too. This was no mere rhetorical flourish, no appeal for the patriotic vote. It was a confession of faith. That faith was intuitive, to be sure, but it was not blind. It was rather reasoned and undismayed. For no statesman of his generation was a harsher critic of those social and economic conditions that seemed to threaten American democracy, half a century ago, than was Bryan, but none was more sure that democracy would triumph over those threats.

And none, it may be added, better understood the nature of democracy. That understanding was both an inheritance and an achievement—something he had been born to, something he had come to through experience. For more fully than any man of his time he summed up, in himself, the American character. Everything about him illustrated that quality which justified his title, "The Great Commoner." Born in a small farming town in southern Illinois—appropriately named Salem—he came from mixed Scotch, Irish and English stock, from both North and South. One of his parents was Baptist, one Methodist; he himself joined the Presbyterian Church. For generations his family had participated in that westward movement which is part of the American epic—from tidewater Virginia to the Valley, from the Valley to the banks of the Ohio, from the Ohio to the Mississippi; he himself continued the process by moving out to what was then the frontier in Nebraska. He attended a small denominational college, studied law, dabbled in poli-

tics, and finally found himself in the championship of a great popular cause.

Bryan's career is familiar enough: how he identified himself with the agrarian crusade sweeping the West like a prairie fire; how, at the age of thirty, he went to Congress and won fame fighting for the income tax, tariff reform, and—above all—free silver; how when the Cleveland administration failed the farmers, he captured control of the Democratic organization, cemented an alliance with the Populists, and pledged the party to a program of reform; how at the Chicago convention of 1896 he stirred the delegates to a frenzy of enthusiasm with his great Cross of Gold oration and himself won the nomination to the presidency; how he waged "the first battle" like a crusade, sweeping the length and breadth of the land, inspiring men everywhere with a new faith in democracy; how, defeated by Mark Hanna and his millions, he held control of the Democratic organization and received the nomination again in 1900; how through eight years of defeat he retained the affection of his followers, went down to defeat again in 1908, and was powerful enough still to dictate the nomination of Woodrow Wilson in 1912. It is a spectacular story, a story without parallel in American political history.

For defeated candidates are usually forgotten and lost causes relegated to historical oblivion, but Bryan was not forgotten and the causes which seemed lost triumphed in the end. He refused to acknowledge defeat, not out of vanity or ambition, but because he

was sure that the causes which he championed were right, and sure that right would triumph in the end. And, right or not, most of them did. Few statesmen have ever been more fully vindicated by history. Item by item the program which Bryan had consistently espoused, from the early nineties on into the new century, was written onto the statute books—written into law by those who had denounced and ridiculed it. Call the list of the reforms: government control of currency and of banking, government regulation of railroads, telegraph and telephone, trust regulation, the eight-hour day, labor reforms, the prohibition of injunctions in labor disputes, the income tax, tariff reform, anti-imperialism, the initiative, the referendum, woman suffrage, temperance, international arbitration. These were not all original with Bryan, but it was Bryan who championed them in season and out, who kept them steadily in the political forefront, who held his party firmly to their advocacy.

And he did this with extraordinary astuteness, with consummate ability. For few men have ever been more admirably equipped for political leadership than was the Great Commoner. Tall, handsome, with open countenance, he was a commanding figure on the platform, and when he lifted his voice it was like a whole chorus of heavenly voices. This was nature's greatest gift to him—a voice so melodious, so vibrant, that it cast a spell over his auditors. But he had more than a personality, more than a voice. He was always in command of his subject as well as of his audience, he was

wily in defense and audacious in attack, he had endless courage. He had, too, that sense for the jugular vein which is one of the marks of the great strategist—an ability to go to the heart of a matter, to clarify it and simplify it. And with all this went a winning friendliness, loyalty to supporters, a homeliness of speech and a democracy of manners that endeared him to his followers and, in time, even to his enemies.

Yet even this record does not fully explain Bryan's hold on the American people or the unique position which he occupies in our history. For it was his qualities of character rather than his political astuteness that won for him such loyalty as no other leader of his own generation could command—such loyalty as no other American between Clay and Franklin Roosevelt has commanded. Irreproachable in private and professional life, his career was characterized throughout by utter integrity, unqualified sincerity, passionate conviction, courageous consistency, faith in the wisdom of the common man and in the processes of democracy, religious belief in the identity of morals and politics, and an unalterable assurance that the right must eventually triumph over the wrong.

For to Bryan politics was, in the last analysis, a matter of morals. Deeply religious, he tested all issues by moral standards which were to him rigid and unqualified. If he thought a policy, a program, right, he would take it up, and he fought the good fight for many causes that seemed to be lost causes. He had, perhaps, an oversimple view of the world in which he

lived, and his standards of right and wrong were emotional and personal rather than intellectual. But in the end he trusted not so much his own judgment as the judgment of the plain people. And this was in the American tradition.

It is for his qualities of character, indeed, that Bryan will be remembered—remembered when the particular causes which he argued are forgotten and the incomparable eloquence with which he argued them echoes only dimly in the memories of old men. For it was not so much that his character was magnanimous—which it was—as that it was so representative of the most typical aspects of American character of that generation.

For Bryan was the last great spokesman of the America of the nineteenth century—of the America of the Middle West and the South, the America of the farm and the country town, the America that read its Bible and went to Chautauqua, distrusted the big city and Wall Street, believed in God and the Declaration of Independence. He was, himself, one of these people. He thought their thoughts, and he spoke the words they were too inarticulate to speak. Above all, he fought their battles. He never failed to raise his voice against injustice, he never failed to believe that in the end justice would be done. Others of his generation served special interests or special groups—the bankers, the railroads, the manufacturers, the officeholders; he looked upon the whole population as his constituency. Others were concerned with the getting of office or of



gain; he was zealous to advance human welfare. And when the Blaines and the Hills, the Platts and the Quays, the Hannas and the Forakers are relegated to deserved oblivion, the memory of Bryan will be cherished by the people in whom he had unfaltering faith.

Where is that boy, that Heaven-born Bryan,  
That Homer Bryan who sang from the West?  
Gone to join the shadows with Altgeld the Eagle,  
Where the kings and the slaves and the troubadours rest.\*

\* From *Collected Poems* of Vachel Lindsay. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1925.



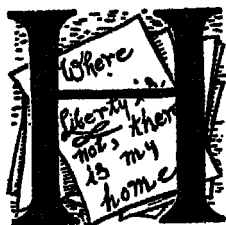
THOMAS PAINE

# Thomas Paine

1737-1809

by

Struthers Burt



HE WAS FIVE FEET TEN, LEAN AND well proportioned. A charming-looking man if one is to judge by Romney's portrait and the portrait painted when he was younger for his friend Henry Laurens, president of the Continental Congress.

And then there is that bust in the New York Historical Society carved by John Wesley Jarvis, nephew of John Wesley, the great Methodist, with whom Paine lived for a while after his return to America in 1802. By that time the old eagle was ill, worn by years of struggle and misfortune and misunderstanding, and a long term in a French prison, but the strong pointed chin is there, and the arched inquiring eyebrows, now grown shaggy, and the quizzical mouth, the lower lip full and the corners going up. And even in the marble

you have a sense of the most noticeable feature of all, his most distinguishing trait, as those who knew him agreed, the direct look of the dark and luminous eyes.

There is something in that bust of the later Washington and the later Voltaire. Old and gallant men are likely to come to resemble each other.

He was five feet ten and a believer in God and a future life, and said so plainly in his *Age of Reason*, the great controversial work which got him into so much trouble, and which he wrote late in life when he was in France; for a while a member, speaking little French, not understanding it much, of the Revolutionary Chamber of Deputies; for a while a prisoner of that same Chamber when Robespierre came to power. He—Paine—the perpetual rebel, the fountainhead of the American Revolution, had balked at unnecessary bloodshed. He had voted against the execution of Louis XVI. It is nice to think of an American, hardly speaking the language, standing up and doing that. By the merest chance he missed being guillotined.

Nor was he unclean in his habits, or writings, or appearance.

In an age in which laxity in morals and talk was condoned in a way even our own supposedly frank and liberal period has never attained, his private life was singularly without scandal. There were those two unfortunate drab marriages in his early life before he came to America, the first terminated by death, the second by divorce, but beyond that there seems to have been nothing. Yet he was attractive to women,

for women like power in a man, an inner flame, and Paine had both to an extreme degree but, so far as we know, women were his friends and no more. It was as if he were too busy to have much of a personal life, too preoccupied with the great task he had set himself; too dedicated, a monk, a friar of liberty and democracy. And if in his old age he became somewhat careless in his dress—in his youth and maturity he had been neat and sober—it was probably part of this preoccupation, plus the loss of vanity that overtakes old men and the inevitable weariness that follows thousands of days of dressing and undressing.

He had his own answer to the last charge. "Let those dress who need it," he said.

One occasional vice he had, and he admitted it. Sometimes he drank too much. But who in the eighteenth century didn't?

So that was the appearance of the man, and his surface habits, and so far as his religion went, his deepest convictions, and yet not so many years ago another great American, Theodore Roosevelt, but not a real rebel, not a profound thinker—that wasn't his type of greatness—called him "a filthy little atheist," and for a hundred and fifty years, indeed until very recently, Thomas Paine, this great, this restless, this immensely important American, has been held in misesteem, and in many cases hated, by the vast majority of those who have inherited the country which, in a certain way, more than any other man he helped to make. He was a filthy little atheist, this tall lean fire-

brand! This prophet. This man of vision. This clairvoyant. This Founding Father. This man who risked his life repeatedly for what he thought was right. And he was to be regarded with deep suspicion. And his writings were to be unread. And he wasn't even to be given the dignity of his full name, but was to be called "Tom" Paine as if he were a cheap rabble rouser and a corner politician. Here and there, however, there have always been Americans who understood him better; and his writings, *Common Sense*, *The American Crisis*, *The Rights of Man*, *The Age of Reason*, have always had a large sale, but almost clandestine, almost as if they were indecent. Occasionally, too, some respected American, some man of honor in his time, has arisen to defend him. Another Thomas, Thomas Edison, said of him, "Important as were some of Paine's mechanical inventions [Paine, like his friend Benjamin Franklin, was an inventor as well as a statesman] they seem to me of minor interest when we consider 'Common Sense' and Paine's planning of this great American republic, of which he may justly be considered the founder."

What did Edison mean? for he too was clairvoyant as all inventors and poets and prophets and a few major statesmen are. Clairvoyance is seeing what is needed and what will happen. Well, we will come to what Edison meant, and also what Paine foresaw later on, but first let us talk briefly of Paine's life because it was so exceptional. Few men have become successful so late in life with such few premonitions of

success: Ulysses Grant, Toussaint L'Ouverture, the Haitian liberator, a few others, not many. In a way Paine's life was a typical American success story, and in a way a typical story of American failure. Paine went up like a rocket. For a while he was the most popular man in America. Nine years later he was despised and hated, and six years after this sudden about-face, in 1802, when he returned to America, he was refused—the final insult—the right to vote as an American citizen.

For the first thirty-seven years of his life Paine was an obscure man. He was born in Thetford, England, in 1737, of Quaker parents. His father was a staymaker; a corsetmaker. Paine had little formal education, his father was too poor to afford much schooling, but he did inculcate in his son the love of reading, and Quakers, in those days, were thoughtful folk. Paine for a few years exhibited the restlessness that later on was to distinguish him; for a little while he was a sailor, for a while an excise officer in a time when smuggling made that an exciting profession, and then for a period he became a staymaker himself, and married, and seemed to have settled down. It is amusing to think of Paine as a corsetmaker, he who disliked restraint of any kind. Before long, however, he managed to get up to London, and there he attended science lectures and gradually met various people who were attracted to him because of his conversation and ideas. Among these was Benjamin Franklin, then the representative of the American colonies in London,

and in 1774 Franklin persuaded Paine to sail for Philadelphia to take charge of Franklin's *Pennsylvania Magazine*. Immediately Paine found his niche; immediately the square peg in a round hole became the square peg in a square hole. He loved America, he saw that here was the natural home of democracy, and he more than any other man, more even than Jefferson, understood what democracy meant and foresaw its immense implications; implications that are beginning to be visible today, implications that a great many Americans are still unaware of or still deny.

That is why it is so interesting that Paine under the stress, under the impetus, of present events is coming, after a hundred and fifty years of neglect and misunderstanding and insult, once again into his own. That is why it is significant that more and more people are beginning to recognize him as one of the fifty or so greatest Americans.

Benjamin Franklin said, "Where liberty is, there is my home." Paine said, "Where liberty is not, there is my home"; a subtle phrase and one that needs explanation lest it be misunderstood. What Paine meant was that wherever he saw injustice and inequality and tyranny there he would make his temporary home to fight these enemies of man. And as always he put his theories into action. He was an immensely brave man and that rare combination, a man both spiritually and physically brave. With the end of the Revolution, honor after honor was thrust upon him; Congress voted him \$3,000, a large sum of money in those days;



the state of New York granted him 300 acres near New Rochelle; but by 1787, a man of fifty, Paine was off for England, the country he had deserted thirteen years before, and eventually hunted out of England because of his revolutionary ideas, he fled to France and became, as has been said, a deputy to the new French congress.

Then he did a tactless and foolish thing, and before that he had done a reckless thing. Had it not been for the latter, he might have escaped with the former. But he was not a tactful man and when he was angry he could write scorching and bitter and unfair sentences. Languishing in a French prison, in imminent danger of death, and feeling that the American government was making no attempt to rescue him, he wrote in 1796, his famous, or rather, infamous, letter to Washington accusing Washington of Toryism and unmitigated vanity. You can't accuse a national idol at the height of his popularity and expect applause. America repudiated Paine as it had once honored him. But by now *The Age of Reason* had been published and Paine was wide open to the attacks of the reactionary, the overpious, and the lovers of the status quo. His "Letter to Washington" alienated his friends and threw them into the ranks of his enemies. By now the whole world was against him.

*The Age of Reason* is not a defense of atheism. Once more, Paine was not an atheist. He was a deist, an eighteenth century humanist. He believed firmly in God and a future life, but he did not believe in

miracles or mystery or revealed religion or the church. Right or wrong, his attitude was no different from that of many modern rationalistic, extremely popular clergymen.

But we can forget his sorrows, for now he is dead, he has been dead a hundred and thirty-three years. And we can even begin to forget the unjust obloquy cast upon him, in the recent turn of events which now at long last is restoring him to his proper place. All we need to remember is what he did in the dark days of the American Revolution to make this a country, and what he perceived democracy to be, both of which have an immediate and overwhelmingly important meaning for us today.

Paine—there is no better term for it—was “the spark plug” of the American Revolution. It was he who in the beginning by his writings made the issue clear—he was no orator, no public speaker; he made the issue clear when other men, equally good men, equally ardent Americans, were still in doubt, still confused, still hopeful that some compromise, some appeasement could be made with the forces of tyranny. Paine knew better. He knew by intuition and logic that you cannot appease tyranny, that you cannot live with it, because if you could it would not be tyranny. He knew that in all such issues there comes a time when there is no middle ground, when men must take sides. When they are for or against. Like Patrick Henry, only repeatedly, and with all the forces of reasoning, he said, “Give me liberty, or give me death.”

And he said this in simple and direct language, and his words ran like a great fire through the American colonies.

It was instantaneous. It was tremendous. It was a conflagration. Paine's pamphlets were sold by the thousands. One day there was discussion and hesitation and doubt, the next there was decision and revolution. But that was only the beginning. The American Revolution lasted eight years, and during those eight years there was little but defeat and disappointment. For every Saratoga there were a dozen Valley Forges, a dozen Battles of Long Island. The fainthearted fell away. Ragged, weary, hopelessly outnumbered, held together by the patient, huge, indomitable shadow of Washington, the American armies fought on, and it was Paine who supplied the words that took hold of men's hearts, and the arguments that made them strong.

"These are the times that try men's souls," he said, and he spoke contemptuously of "summer patriots." Nor, as usual, was he a man not to suit his actions to his theories; for a while he served on the staff of General Nathanael Greene.

But there is more to Paine's vision even than that. He perceived the outer, furthest edges of democracy decades before anyone else did. He perceived that democracy, like any great articulated theory of government, is dynamic; that it must grow, expand, and improve itself or else die. That it cannot stand still. And instinctively, as shown by his actions, he perceived that

democracy cannot live in a world with another system mutually destructive. Years later Abraham Lincoln quoted the Bible: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." He meant the United States of America. But the world itself has become a single house now, by communication, by a score of other things, and a small house at that. All preventive-medicine men know that so long as yellow fever exists anywhere, even in the most remote corner, all men and women are in danger. Paine knew that about government. He knew that tyranny, cruelty, the demeaning of the individual were against the laws of man and God, and he knew that there would come a day when they could no longer exist side by side with freedom.

Remember again what he said: "Where liberty is not, there is my home."

He was a great American, one of the very greatest. And of them all save Lincoln—statesmen, I mean—he was the only prophet, the only seer, the only clairvoyant. No, I have forgotten Woodrow Wilson.



# Woodrow Wilson

*1856-1924*

by

Frederick Lewis Allen

IF YOU HAD VISITED AUGUSTA, GEORGIA, JUST AFTER THE Civil War, and had seen the Reverend Joseph Wilson's little boy Tommy playing about the Presbyterian manse, you would hardly have picked him as a future president of the United States. For this child, brought up in the pious and reserved atmosphere of a ministerial family, was not only an odd little shaver, bespectacled and shy, but was also curiously slow to develop. He did not learn to read until he was nine,

could not read easily until he was eleven. You might have noticed that the intellectual life of the Wilson family was intense, that the boy was taught by his father to be precise in the use of words, and that he responded readily to the advice of a teacher who told him to frame a sentence "not as if he were loading a shotgun, but as if he were loading a rifle"; and so you might have guessed that if Tommy ever caught up with his schoolmates he might become a teacher or writer. But you would never have expected him to survive in the hurly-burly of political strife.

And for long years thereafter you would have continued to have doubts. Tommy Wilson—who in time dropped his first name for his middle one, Woodrow—went on to Princeton, became hugely interested in the study of politics and particularly of nineteenth century English politics, and organized a college debating club where political affairs were discussed in parliamentary fashion. Deciding that the road to political opportunity led through the law, he went on to the University of Virginia Law School, and there he started another debating club, at whose meetings he spoke brilliantly. But early in his law course he broke down: his physique simply could not keep up with his ambition. Recovering at length he tried the practice of law for a while, but got few clients and hated the sordid conditions which a young lawyer met; and so, discouraged, he went back to the academic shades, to study politics once more from books. While studying at Johns Hopkins University he produced a remarkable volume

about Congress—but not the least remarkable thing about it was that he never saw Congress in action until after he had finished writing it! Not until he was almost twenty-nine (and just married) did this sheltered young man get his first steady income-producing job—as an instructor in a newly formed women's college, Bryn Mawr. Surely, you would have predicted, here is a man destined to remain a spectator in the grandstand of the fierce game of life, if indeed he ever gets himself organized in time to get anywhere at all.

But now young Wilson forged ahead. He was an able lecturer, a felicitous writer. His grasp of affairs was sure and exact. Shy as he was in man-to-man contacts, out of place as he felt in a rough-and-tumble crowd, he knew from the books all the principles of administration and leadership, and he found that he not only could sway men from the platform, but could manage them in committees and other organized groups. Up the academic ladder he climbed—at Bryn Mawr, at Wesleyan, at Princeton. As his self-assurance grew, he even thawed to the extent of becoming temporarily a football coach at Wesleyan. Soon he was acknowledged to be the rising star of the Princeton faculty and was broadening his reputation outside the college by his books and lectures. And when he was forty-five, something happened which must have been almost incredible to those who had known only the shy little Tommy Wilson of Augusta. The president of Princeton resigned, and with the enthusiastic and almost unanimous acclaim of trustees, faculty, and stu-

dents, Woodrow Wilson became the new president of the University.

From this point on, a curious spiral pattern was to repeat itself again and again in Wilson's career. He had an intense moral zeal, he had the ability to frame an effective program of action and push it ingeniously, and although his health would always be frail he was somehow invigorated by the presence of a great audience, so that he could carry on unfalteringly through a weary campaign and capture his hearers wherever he went. But he was never quite one of the boys. He tended to hold himself aloof, especially from men whom he could not win over to his side. And at length there would come a time when he would overreach himself, the battle would be joined, and his enemies would go savagely after his scalp. Yet in each such crisis he was rescued by some new opportunity which his growing strength as a public leader had brought his way.

As president of Princeton he championed a series of reforms, jammed through the first ones successfully, then tried to remake the social structure of the college on more democratic lines, and ran head on into a violent quarrel—the sort of quarrel from which there seemed to be no way out but resignation. He seemed to have been stopped. But no: his ardor as a spokesman for democratic values had caught the attention of some shrewd politicians, and they offered him the Democratic nomination for the governorship of New Jersey—just in time to enable him to resign from Princeton



without humiliation. Entranced at being at last in real politics, Wilson stormed the state and won the election.

As governor he entered another spiral. He had owed his nomination to a group of machine bosses. They had given it to him without any strings, but of course in the belief that, after the traditional manner of wardroom politics, he would be grateful and play ball with them. He did not; he cut loose from them, swept a stiff reform program through the state legislature with strong popular backing, and when the bosses turned to rend him, went after them tooth and nail. Another struggle developed which would probably have gone against him—but so striking had been his gubernatorial career that he was given the Democratic nomination for the presidency of the United States. In the fall of 1912, with the Republican party divided, he was elected; and at the age of fifty-six he entered the White House.

As president, once more he moved on to success. Now he was on familiar ground; for few men knew the governmental machinery of the country as he did, or had given thought as he had to the great possibilities of presidential leadership. Wilson drew up a program of progressive legislation and with unprecedented skill he marshaled support for it in a usually recalcitrant Congress and carried it through, measure by measure. Again the opposition gathered its forces. Unexpected problems arose to plague Wilson. Frictions developed. Opponents found him stubborn and stiff-necked. He

just managed to win re-election and would presumably have been in for a stormy second term had not Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare dragged the United States into the First World War early in 1917, and thus thrown Wilson into a position as altered as if he had been elected to a new office. Now he was the war leader of a united nation.

Wilson had hated taking the United States into war—had held back, suffered agonies of indecision, resisted for a long time the clamor for battle, incurred the ridicule of people who thought this professor was devoid of red blood; but when the time came, his great war message—one of the memorable documents of American history—brought him a new and immense prestige.

The war was won: America's strength tipped the scale against Germany and her satellites, as we pray it may now do again. Throughout the war the president, conserving his limited strength by delegating his war duties to subordinates, was preparing himself and public opinion everywhere for the greatest task of his life—that of framing the peace. In this work he was in his element. His high hope for a decent treaty, his lawmaker's enthusiasm for an international league which might enforce the peace, his superb ability to state the case for a lasting settlement "to make the world safe for democracy" (how ironical that phrase came to sound later!), his knack for the strategy of persuading masses of men—all these increased his power.

As the war drew to its end he approached his greatest moment. It was on the basis of his Fourteen Points—his own idea of a fair settlement—that the Germans, beaten back from French soil, capitulated. Traveling to Europe, after the Armistice was signed, to head the American delegation to the Peace Conference, he found himself the idol of the populace in nation after nation—the acclaimed savior of the world. No other man in history had had such a triumph, freely rendered by millions of ordinary men and women.

Then at the Peace Conference the spiral pattern of his career went into its last downcurve. The leaders of the Allied nations had made secret treaties granting one another special territories and privileges, and now that the enemy was prostrate and vengeance had hardened them, only Wilson stood between them and their designs. They jockeyed him into small conferences, made the utmost use of his weakness—his old inability to deal with men in twos and threes—to win at the kind of horse trade for which his background and training had unfitted him. The Treaty of Versailles was not so bad a document as many have made out; compared with what the Nazis would impose, it was generous to a fault; but it was not as Wilson would have had it. Losing again and again in the diplomatic poker game, he consoled himself with the thought that the great League of Nations which was to be set up would rectify all wrongs. Then he came home to present both treaty and league to the Senate—and was

repudiated. Disillusioned by the war and tired of international responsibilities, the senators refused to accept American membership in the league or to ratify the treaty. Trying to stave off this last defeat, Wilson gave his last ounce of strength touring the country, exhorting, pleading. He broke down; and ended his presidency and his life a cripple, tragically beaten.

He had fallen far, men said. He had failed.

But had he? The cause for which he gave his life was essentially the cause for which—through no fault of his—America must again fight today: the right of men and women to live unenslaved by tyranny and aggression. The precise methods for protecting this right will always be disputed, but the aim to protect it is one of the cornerstones of a free civilization, and this aim was never more single-mindedly sought nor more splendidly stated than by Woodrow Wilson. Whoever else among the victors had proved false to that cause, whoever else had been led by greed or irresponsibility or shortsightedness to turn the postwar order into a travesty of men's hopes, Wilson had not lowered his sights. Thanks largely to his leadership, we Americans can now look back to 1918 unashamed of the objects for which we then fought. And if we are still trusted today, if, when the present president of the United States speaks to the world, men believe that he is speaking from the heart and not from the book of guileful propaganda, one reason is that in people's minds still echo the phrases of Woodrow Wilson, the man who had once been little Tommy Wilson, the

preacher's boy in Augusta; and that they remember that he meant what he said:

"The right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right of such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free."



# Lafayette

1757-1834

by

W. E. Woodward

IN HIS YOUTH THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE WAS ONE OF the richest young nobles in France, and he spent his money with spendthrift carelessness. If night clubs had existed in Paris at that time, Lafayette might have been a star customer and a shining ornament of café society. Although there were no night clubs there were gambling rooms; also rather hectic entertainments at the homes of titled ladies whose names were seldom

mentioned in polite circles. At these resorts the handsome and wealthy marquis was a welcome visitor.

He was also well known at the court of Louis XVI, where everybody liked him and nobody expected him ever to amount to anything. A charming fellow, they thought, but wholly useless and incapable, having a good time on money that had been left to him by his grandfather. Of course, there is nothing remarkable in such a situation. Every generation has its rich and idle playboys, and it is also true that very few of them ever change.

But there was more than the playboy to Lafayette. Buried deeply under the layers of frivolity there was another man—a different Lafayette. Imagine the astonishment of his intimates during his Parisian youth if they had known, through some miracle of future vision, that their gay friend was to play a great and heroic role in the world, and that a nation across the sea would hold his name in its loving memory.

A strange incident brought out the inner man and changed the current of his life. One day the Duke of Gloucester, brother of the King of England, had dinner at a house where the marquis was also a guest. In the conversation after dinner the royal duke had a great deal to say about the revolt of the colonies in America. It turned out, surprisingly, that he was opposed to the British policy. His sympathies were with the American colonials, and he said so emphatically. They were free men, he declared, and the British had no right to tax them, or to force upon them a govern-

ment that they had no hand in making. He said that he hoped they would win their independence. Lafayette listened to him attentively and asked many questions.

The brother of King George III had made the young marquis an ardent sympathizer of the American rebels. Thereafter Lafayette had no time for anything but American affairs. In a few months he was making plans to leave France—and join Washington's army. His family caught wind of this project and threatened to have him thrown into the Bastille if he tried to depart from the country. To circumvent them he bought a ship outright and took passage on her secretly.

George Washington, with his wide knowledge of men and affairs, saw at once that Lafayette's coming to join the American Army was an event of immense importance. When he met the marquis he conceived an affection for him that lasted to the end of his life. His attitude toward Lafayette was that of a father toward a beloved son.

Lafayette put the American Revolution into the Social Register, and that is precisely what it needed in the year 1777. Until then the governing powers in France had looked upon the struggle as an uprising of American mobs, of peasants and workers who were causing their British masters some trouble. But the young Marquis de Lafayette belonged to the highest class of French nobility—and he was in the American Army. He would not be there if the leaders of the Revolution were not men of distinction.



The American armies lacked arms, and munitions, and clothing. Washington's army was so ragged that he apologized for its appearance when he first showed it on parade to Lafayette. The arms and clothing could be purchased in France, but the infant American government had no money to pay for them. Now, with Lafayette serving as an American general, the governing powers at Versailles took a different view of the matter. The French government made secret loans to the American Congress and the much-needed supplies began to arrive in shiploads.

During the whole of the American Revolution Lafayette never drew his salary as a general, and he contributed many thousands of dollars to the American cause. On one occasion, when Washington gave him command of a brigade with orders to march into Virginia and fight Cornwallis, Lafayette found, upon joining his troops, that they were in rags. With his own funds he clothed his entire command of several thousand men.

He had a profound effect on the American Revolution, and America had an equally profound effect on him. When the war was over and he returned to France he was a believer in democracy, in human freedom, in political equality. These ideas shaped the whole of his life thereafter. He lost his fortune and spent years in prison for defying despotic men and measures.

If he were living today, where would Lafayette stand, as a Frenchman? Would he be a supporter of Pétain and Vichy, or a defiant fighter, like De Gaulle?

There need be no doubt as to the answer to that question. He would never give in to the Nazi ideas, or "collaborate" with any conqueror who stood on French soil.

On his final visit to the United States in 1825, when the marquis was sixty-eight, the whole country gave him a welcome that has never had an equal, before or since.

Among other honors conferred upon him he was given perpetual American citizenship for himself and his family. This distinction is unique in our history; no other person or family has ever received it. Any of his male descendants may enter the United States as citizens and vote at our elections. Besides this gift of citizenship, Congress made him a present of \$200,000 in money and a township of land in Florida. He needed these gifts, for he was virtually destitute. His large fortune had been used in supporting the cause of democracy and freedom in France.





THOMAS JEFFERSON

# Thomas Jefferson

1743-1826

by

Claude Bowers



INCOLN ONCE SAID THAT "THE PRINCIPLES of Jefferson are the definitions and the axioms of a free society"—a free society that is today being challenged by brute force throughout the world.

In his political concepts, in his militant devotion to democracy, in his love of liberty and independence, in his hatred of religious and racial intolerance, in his contempt for the anarchy of international gangsters, he is the personification and the symbol of the American ideas and ideals that tyranny and savagery are now trying to destroy.

He made himself the personification of things that are fundamental and eternal, and thus his leadership of liberty-loving people even to this day.

And because the things he fought and wrought for in his heroic days have been condemned to extermination by brute force, the genius of Jefferson is again evoked to lead us in the spirit as he once did in the flesh. His papers and letters are left us for our guidance, and because his words were touched with magic and dealt with elemental things, they might have been written this morning in direct answer to the challenge of the tyrants now upon the march. Of no other American in history is this quite so true.

He crystallized in law and confirmed in practice the things that go to the making of the American way of life which the despots of today have mobilized utterly to destroy.

We see him seated at the little desk he had designed in the parlor of the simple apartment in Philadelphia where he lived, responding to the unanimous call of his colleagues to write the Declaration of Independence. Others could have drawn the indictment of a mad monarch and a pliant Parliament perhaps as well; but this man saw beyond the ephemeral grievances of the hour to a new day now made possible for the common lot. As his pen raced over the paper before him, he wrote an indictment academically interesting today as a bit of history, but in the Preamble, which alone gives the document its immortality, he wrote indelibly the American concept of life. He wrote the covenant of democracy:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their

Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

Thus he flung the challenge of freemen to the tyrants of all time.

His life thereafter was devoted to giving reality to that creed. Again we see him, a little older now, in Paris, in the service of his country, reading with consternation a new constitution that made no provision for the protection of the people against the abuse of power. Again his pen spluttered over the paper writing Washington and Madison that "a Bill of Rights is what any people is entitled to, and which no Government can deny or rest on inference." A consummate manager and inspirer of men, he wrote in similar vein to friends and followers throughout the country, put the people on the march, and forced into our fundamental law the Magna Charta of American Rights.

He demanded the freedom of speech, to the end that in America men might speak their honest thought without fear or favor.

He demanded the right of peaceable assembly, that men might declare to the government, resting on their consent, their sovereign will.

He demanded the liberty of the press, that the sovereign people might be put in possession of the facts relating to their interest and freedom.

He made the freeman's home his castle into which

the most powerful in the land dare not enter without due process of law.

Thus did he insist on putting the liberty of the people beyond the reach of transitory power.

But even so, the time soon came, for we were not entirely free from fascistic thought, when reactionary forces challenged the Bill of Rights with the Alien and Sedition Laws. We see men dragged from platforms and shackles put upon the press for daring to criticize those in power. Even in America, the ermine of the courts was stained in the sentencing of patriots to prison in defiance of the Bill of Rights.

And again we see Jefferson step forth in shining armor to lead the struggle definitively to determine, once and for all, that the Preamble of the Declaration and the Bill of Rights, which he had championed, defined the American way worth dying for.

After a bitter battle, with demagogic mobs milling in the streets, with the poisoned arrows of hate and fury turned upon him, the prison doors opened to the release of men who had suffered for opinion's sake—the platform again was open—again the press was free.

But this culminative struggle had disclosed that powerful forces with fascistic concepts were at work to make a mockery of the principles of the Preamble to the Declaration. No longer was it safe to rest our democracy on inference. It had to be put to the arbitrament of debate. And for a full decade the issue was uncertain, as the bitterest and most significant battle in American history was fought. At the head of the



democratic columns rode the red-haired author of the Declaration. Scurrility opened its flood gates upon him. He was a "red," he was a "Jacobin," he was an "atheist," he was a "demagogue"—and all this meant that he was a democrat. With the consummate political genius that was his, he mobilized, organized, munitioned, armed, and led the people in the struggle to determine whether government should rest on the consent of the governed or be imposed by a selfish autocratic few. He won the victory which definitively decreed that ours should be a democratic republic.

Thus he was the penman in the war for national independence; he was the leader in the demand he popularized for a Bill of Rights in the Constitution; he took the gag from the lips of freemen; he struck the shackles from the press; he cleared the way to the platform of popular assemblies; he drew a magic circle around the cabins of the lowly and buttressed the poorest in the courts with the protection of the law.

And he did something more—he drew the Ordinance of Religious Freedom, which ranks with the Declaration of Independence and gives to every man the sacred right to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience.

Some years ago, at Monticello, on a day dedicated to religious freedom, I witnessed a scene that symbolized Jefferson's life. There I listened to a Catholic priest, a Protestant minister, and a Jewish rabbi pay tribute to the outstanding champion of religious freedom in our history, and I saw them march shoulder

to shoulder from the mansion on the hill to lay a wreath on the grave of the common benefactor of us all.

Now all this is sneeringly assailed by totalitarian gunmen denouncing liberty and democracy and threatening their extermination. The idea of the "new order" is as old as tyranny. In the dark days of our Revolution there were some in Virginia who despaired of the processes of democracy and proposed a dictator with arbitrary power over life and property. And again Jefferson fought for the principles of government by consent. His comments then might have been written yesterday. A dictator? "In God's name, from whence have they derived this power? A leader may be offered but not impose himself, nor be imposed upon them. Much less can their necks be submitted to his sword, their breath be taken at his will or caprice."

Thus Jefferson's Preamble to the Declaration is a damnation of totalitarianism, and is applicable today; the Bill of Rights he demanded is an indictment of the dictators of today; his Ordinance of Religious Freedom is an arraignment of the racial and religious intolerance and persecution in nations now under the iron heel of despots.

His words live because they are timeless in their application, and eternal in their truth.

In these days of incredible fantasies and savage ideologies, with the lies of poisonous propaganda momentarily confusing the average mind, I often turn to Jefferson and find the heartening language of the

Americanism for which generations of our forbears fought, wrought, and died. Here we have illuminated the path of patriotic duty. And every word is a summons to the people to the protection of the heritage of freedom—a ringing call to militant resistance to the loathsome creed that any man, by virtue of his cruelty, mendacity and crimes, may mount and ride on the backs of his fellow men over the sacred things of life.

When, with his dying breath, John Adams said, "Thomas Jefferson still lives," he spoke for the ages. For "the spirit of liberty, like the words of the Holy Man, do not perish with the prophet but survive him." Again humanity meets a crisis, and again Jefferson carries the torch to light the way through darkness to the dawn of a new day of the freedom for which he gave his genius and his life.



# Frederick Douglass

1817-1895

by  
Angelo Herndon

THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS IS A SYMBOL OF THE highest hopes and deepest aspirations of the Negro people for freedom. By his fearless and selfless devotion to the cause of freeing the slaves, he helped to make America conscious of the fact that true democracy is not the exclusive privilege of any one race or group,

but the right of all men of all races who would fight and die for it.

Born a slave on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in February, 1817, it was not long before Douglass became aware of the cruelties of the slave system. As a child, his single purpose was to find the answer to the perplexing question: "Why am I a slave?" Such a presumption invariably brought down upon him the terrible wrath and violence of his slave master. But Douglass never retreated. "Knowledge," he reasoned, "unfits a child to be a slave. . . . It cannot be that I shall live and die a slave." And he did not live and die a slave!

Liberty! Freedom! The mere thought of the words burned deeply in his soul like a flaming torch. Words? But how precious! By law and deed these were the exclusive rights of the "superior" white masters. Law and custom placed him on the same level with horses and cattle. His humanity was made extinct by the sordid idea of property—his manhood lost as a chattel.

Yet Frederick Douglass could stand on the banks of Chesapeake Bay watching the white sails of ships as they moved off to sea, with such disturbing thoughts as these running through his mind:

"You are loosed from your mopings, and free. I am fast in my chains and am a slave! You move merrily before the gentle gale, and I sadly before the bloody whip. . . . O, that I were free! . . . Alas! betwixt me and you the turbid waters roll. Go on, go on . . ."

Through carefully laid plans, and with the assist-

ance of friends, Douglass escaped from the land of bondage, and arrived in New York, September 3, 1838, as a free man and a fugitive. Three years later he made his first public appearance at the Nantucket Antislavery Convention, called by William Lloyd Garrison and his friends. Thus began his career as an agent and lecturer for the abolitionist cause.

At the meetings he addressed, his abolitionist friends always introduced him as the "fugitive slave," a "piece of Southern property" that could speak. But when narrating his experiences as a slave, Douglass never limited himself to a mere statement of the facts. George Foster, John A. Collins, and others urged him to "stick to the facts. . . . We'll take care of the philosophy." But Douglass could not follow such instruction. He was now growing in knowledge, and needed room. "*It did not entirely satisfy me to narrate wrongs; I felt like denouncing them.* I could not always curb my moral indignation for the perpetrators of slaveholding villainy long enough for a circumstantial statement of the facts."

It was not enough for Douglass to have his own freedom. He knew that the emancipation of all the slaves and the safety of America could not be made secure as long as men remained complacent and indifferent to the corroding influences of the slave system. Thus, Douglass's life, which Vice-President Henry Wilson once characterized as "an epic which finds few to equal it," was essentially the life of a *genuine* democrat. He understood that the freedom of

the slaves could be effected only by the closest alliance with all those striving for universal democracy. For this reason he encouraged and supported every movement which sought to achieve this aim. Every foe that could be won against slavery was another triumph for justice.

*The slave system itself*: this was the thing that had to be destroyed. As a direct attack upon the system, at first, Douglass supported the Moral Suasion crusade led by the Garrisonians, in opposition to Gerrit Smith, Myron Holly, and William Goodell, who held that the system could only be destroyed by the use of the ballot box. During this period of appealing to the moral sense of the people against slavery, Douglass's duties consisted of traveling throughout the North and East, speaking at meetings and conventions organized by friends and sympathizers.

While visiting London, where Englishmen collected money with which to pay the ransom for his freedom upon his eventual return to America, Douglass decided upon a new plan which he thought would further enhance the cause of abolition. The matter of an abolitionist paper was discussed with his English friends, who readily provided him with funds for such a purpose. But to Douglass's amazement, when he returned to America, he found William Lloyd Garrison and many of his friends in Boston opposed to the plan. They maintained that no such paper was needed; that Douglass was more useful as a lecturer; that he was better fitted to speak than to write, and that the venture could not succeed anyway. This came as a terrible

shock to him. A disciple of William Lloyd Garrison, and fully in accord with his doctrine that the Constitution was a proslavery document, Douglass for the first time was compelled to make a break with the very friends to whom he had always looked for advice and direction.

Failing to convince the Garrisonians, he moved to Rochester, New York, out of "motives of peace," where he began the publication of the *North Star*. Through his paper he continued to espouse the Garrisonian *nonvoting principle* which called for the nonslaveholding states to dissolve the Union with the slaveholding states.

The *North Star* received the support of such eminent men as Chief Justice Chase, Horace Mann, Joshua R. Giddings, Charles Sumner, John G. Palfrey, William H. Seward, Gerrit Smith, the Reverend Samuel J. May, and many others in America and abroad. After four years, Douglass changed the name of his paper from the *North Star* to *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, "in order to distinguish it from the many papers with 'Stars' in their titles."

Douglass showed a singleness of purpose and clarity of vision which were rare in his time. The experience with his paper and the intimate knowledge of slavery, gained at first hand, perhaps gave him an advantage over most of his contemporaries. He understood that it was necessary to abolish the system of slavery, not only because the Negro slaves would thereby gain their freedom, but because America



could not grow and develop into a free land as the Founding Fathers had intended.

Thus, it can be understood why he later changed his views with respect to the Constitution being a pro-slavery document. The Constitution, as he now understood it, was a "warrant for the abolition of slavery in every state of the Union." Although the Republicans based their platform of 1860 on limiting slavery to the slave states where it then existed, Douglass threw his support on the side of Lincoln because he felt that Lincoln's ultimate aim was the extinction of slavery.

As the storm of southern secession swept the nation, Douglass urged the government to take a firm stand in quelling the threatened rebellion before it had a chance to develop. But his plea was to no avail. Every offer of compromise was made to appease the southern slaveholders. Men who had formerly supported the cause of all-out abolition now wavered and succumbed to the pressure of the slavocracy. State legislatures repealed the laws which had formerly been passed to provide protection against the capture of fugitive slaves. It appeared to Douglass that the loyal government itself was ready to accept peace at any price. Even when rebel cannon began to roar at Bull Run, Ball's Bluff, Big Bethel, and Fredericksburg, Lincoln clung to the hope that peace could be maintained.

When the war had already begun and havoc wrought upon government property by rebel forces, President Lincoln expressed his belief that the Negro was the "cause of the war." But in spite of all these

halfhearted efforts of the government in prosecuting the war, Douglass saw it as the beginning of the end of slavery. To win the war in short order and to crush the power of the slavocracy, he urged Lincoln to enlist Negroes as soldiers on the side of the Union forces.

Against the claim that "*this is a white man's country and the white man's war,*" Douglass replied, in his now famous speech, "Men of Color, To Arms": "When the first rebel cannon shattered the walls of Sumter and drove away its starving garrison, I predicted that the war then and there inaugurated would not be fought out entirely by white men. *A war undertaken and brazenly carried on for the perpetual enslavement of colored men, calls logically for colored men to help suppress it.*"

It is, in a sense, tragic that Douglass becomes meaningful to most Americans at a time when the new slavery which is fascism strives to engulf the democratic world. It is fortunate, however, that his vision applies with such startling clarity to the major problems of our time.





ROBERT E. LEE

# Robert E. Lee

1807-1870

by

Douglas S. Freeman



IN THE OLD TOWN WHERE I LIVE, THE Valentine Museum preserves in a special room the original cast of the marble recumbent statue of Lee at Lexington. Around the cast, not long ago, a group of awed school children stood for the first time. "He's dead," one of them whispered. "He isn't," another insisted, "he's asleep." Then the boy touched the plaster and said, "Wake up, General Lee; we need you."

That we do! We need Lee! Equally we need Lincoln. We need Andrew Jackson; we need Grant; we need Washington. If they were here in this supreme hour of our national danger, each would have his counsel, each his contribution. It is not possible to say what

the advice of each might be, because, as I have had occasion to warn those who delight in military comparisons, circumstance is incommensurable. Instead of professing to know what Lee would do now, may I recall a few of the things he did in 1861-1865? His beloved Virginia and the Southland then passed through an ordeal similar in many respects to that which the country now faces, but with the all-embracing difference that the Confederacy lost inevitably whereas the nation today can win if it will. That states the case simply. The question is not whether we can, but whether we will win. Our will is to be measured by our effort, by our sacrifice, by what we put into the war chest of the nation.

All our long road, Robert E. Lee traversed. Before 1861, General Winfield Scott had said that the United States would be wise to insure the life of Lee for \$1,000,000 because of the value of Lee's future service to the nation. Lee decided to stand by his own state, his own people. He was born to make the decision he did. When he had made it, he assumed immediately the direction of the military and naval defense of Virginia. From the date, April 23, 1861, until the first major battle, July 21st, the inflexible counsel of Lee to Virginia could be put in a single sentence: Press the preparations for war to the absolute limit of the people's capacity and resources, as long as practicable, even though this requires a strict defensive. That policy was enjoined on all the outpost commanders. Lee, moreover, "warned those around him," a

contemporary of 1861 has written, "that they were just on the threshold of a long and bloody war, and he advised them if they had any idea that the contest in which they were about to engage was to be a slight one, to dismiss all such thoughts from their minds, saying that he knew the Northern people well, and knew they would never yield in that contest except at the conclusion of a long and desperate struggle." Change "Northern" to "German," and this remark is as sound and monitory now as in the spring of 1861.

General Lee never thought the defensive was the road to victory. The offensive, and that alone, would purchase freedom. He believed that the offensive should not be undertaken till the means of sustaining it were at hand; but once an army was ready to strike, it must strike with all it had. Illusion must not be cherished. Nothing was certain in war but uncertainty. An adversary always must be expected to do what strategically he ought to do. In effort, as in the matching of wits, he must be outdone. Early in the war, Lee protested against the unwillingness of the southern soldier to do military labor. Said Lee: "Why should we leave to [the enemy] the whole advantage of labor? Combined with valor, fortitude and boldness, of which we have our fair proportion, it should lead us to success. What carried the Roman soldiers into all countries, but this happy combination? The evidences of their labor last to this day. There is nothing so military as labor, and nothing so important to an army as to save the lives of its soldiers."

Toward the end of the war, Lee perceived that the outcome depended not on what his valiant army was to do but on what the people were willing to do to support the men in the field. He wrote: "Everything, in my opinion, has depended and still depends upon the disposition and feelings of the people. Their representatives can best decide how they will bear the difficulties and sufferings of their condition and how they will respond to the demands which the public safety requires." If those two quoted sentences were in type on the "stone" of a newspaper composing room, any man who picked up the lines would think they had been dropped from a current presidential message. Now as surely as in the days of General Lee, the outcome of the war will be decided less by the valor of the army or the wisdom of the administration than by the exertion of the whole nation. That exertion in the aggregate cannot be above the sum of individual contributions, which will have a determinable average, high or low.

Least known of all General Lee's achievements was that of utilizing a wide range of abilities. He knew that interest and hard work improved every performance, whether that performance was routine or original. For that reason, among a score, Lee always respected personality and usually got for the public service the best that every man had to offer. Consistently, Lee's appeal was to character. American armies traditionally are riddled with jealousies and sometimes are beset with cabals, but the Army of Northern Virginia



under Lee was never hampered by faction or by rivalry. This was not because of unique devotion on the part of its corps of officers. It was due almost entirely to the patience of Lee, to his skill in adjustment and to his fairness alike to mediocre and to capable, to those not of his mind as surely as to those who saw eye to eye with him. Much of his military correspondence could be put into any textbook on the management of men—an art imperative now.

For years before 1861, Lee lived close to George Washington's home and in the presence of Washington's relics. Lee's father-in-law was the adopted grandson of the first president. From Washington, the Confederate chieftain learned the power of example. Lee could have said with "Stonewall" Jackson, "I have tried to set the troops a good example." An example it was, also, in sagacious leadership and in the soldierly mean of boldness between the extremes of overcaution and of rashness—precisely the mean that America today must find in the Western Pacific.

Lee set, likewise, an animating example of the "antique virtue" of equanimity. That quality is higher than its noblest component, which is courage. Equanimity is distinguishable also from mere determination, which may be unthinking, and from patience, which may be more of a vice than a virtue. Equanimity is essentially individual, rather than national, because it postulates the superior rather than the average character. It is the state of mind that submits itself willingly to the judgment of time in the consciousness of right-

eous effort and in the humble admission that the finite mind cannot be infallible. This means, in terms less abstract, that Lee believed in the invincibility of character, believed that the man who had done the best of which he had knowledge could leave the rest to God. Americans safely may do this today if, but only if, all the while, from mine to watchtower, from submarine to pulpit, they do their best in labor and in fortitude—and no less than their best. National effort unequal to national danger never can produce the "equal mind."

Equanimity such as Lee's has no place for despair. Its dynamic is hope. Paradoxical as seems that quality in the exemplar of what men call a "lost cause," hope fired Lee even in the hour of the destruction of the government for which he unsparingly had fought. After General Lee's death in October, 1870, his heirs opened a military valise he had carried with him through his campaigns. It contained a few papers only. Among them were several sheets, large and small, on which were reflections in the autograph of the general. Some of these manifestly were quotations from books Lee had read in winter quarters; others may have come from his pen in hours when he was alone in his tent and had wrestled triumphantly with his own spirit. The spirit of most of the papers was that of a favorite motto of his from Marcus Aurelius: "Misfortune nobly borne is good fortune."

Most cherished of all the paragraphs written in the general's handwriting and found among the papers in his valise was one which Colonel Charles Marshall

quoted in the address at the laying of the cornerstone of the Lee monument in Richmond, October 27, 1887. Whether this was written by Lee or was copied by him from some book, investigation has not yet determined. Regardless of authorship, it is an epitome of the faith of Robert E. Lee and is, of all his reflections, the one that most fully embraces his message to his nation to-day: "My experience of men has neither disposed me to think worse of them, nor indisposed me to serve them; nor, in spite of failure, which I lament, of errors, which I now see and acknowledge, or of the present aspect of affairs do I despair of the future. The truth is this: The march of Providence is so slow, and our desires so impatient, the work of progress is so immense, and our means of aiding it so feeble, the life of humanity is so long, and that of the individual so brief, that we often see only the ebb of the advancing wave, and are thus discouraged. It is history that teaches us to hope."



# Paul Revere

1735-1818

by

Esther Forbes

**THE VOICE IN THE DARK CRYING THE ALARUM, THE MAN on the horse always galloping through a moonlit night of long ago—galloping into poetry, folklore, art, legend, advertising, editorials—hardly a real man on an actual horse, more a symbol of preparedness, awareness of danger.**

Although that is what Paul Revere seems to us today, it was not what he seemed to himself or to his contemporaries. To those who knew him he was one

of those men who always get things done. They were impressed with the way he could learn a new trade as fast as other men could turn around, for he was the typical "ingenious Yankee" of the period. And they called him "cool in thought, ardent in action." But he was not so cool as to be quietly thinking when the time had come for quick action, nor so ardent as to jump heedlessly into difficulties and by his carelessness get himself and everybody else into trouble. For instance, take the way he rode his horse the night before the battle of Lexington. If he had been too cool and cautious he never would have taken that ride at all. If as "ardent" as in the poem and all known statues and pictures of him, he would have foundered the animal and been of little good as a messenger. Paul Revere had been riding that horse for some three hours before the British captured him and it was still so fresh that the major (as Paul Revere remembered) "asked the Sarjant if his horse was tired, he said yes . . . he ordered him to take my horse."

It is as "bold Revere" he was sung in a song of that day in the ale houses, taverns, shops, along the wharves of Boston. So, to the men who knew him best, he was bold and ardent, but also cool and ingenious. Such men not only are ready to do things, but can do them well.

In many ways he was a typical American—even to the fact that his father was not born over here, but came as a child refugee from Europe and could not even speak English when he arrived. He was thirteen

and penniless, but like many older and more important people he had come to find a different way of life and greater freedom than was possible in France during the religious persecutions of the period. His son was ready to risk everything for that way of life and that freedom. No one around Boston cared whether or not Paul Revere's father was a foreigner. They knew that being an American is not a matter of blood or race, but point of view. Then, too, Paul Revere's industry and versatility make him seem a typical American. He was an artisan and worked with his hands all his life.

As his father was a silversmith, Paul first learned this trade, beginning to work when he was thirteen or fourteen—and people then worked from sunup to sundown—sometimes for twelve hours every day but Sunday. He was still a boy when his father died and, as eldest son, it was up to him to support his mother, sisters, and younger brothers. Soon people were saying there was not a better silversmith in all Boston (now they say in all America). His ledgers show that he made silver tankards and trays, coffee pots, flagons and cups (and sometimes little things like "a baby's whistle," a chain for a pet squirrel, a dog collar) for many of the wealthiest and most important people in Boston. It was obvious that if he continued to work so hard and well and said nothing to offend his wealthy patrons, he could be sure of a good living. But first there was a war with the French and Indians. He went off on that. And he evidently liked to say what he

thought. He sided with the men who believed England had no right to tax the colonies without giving them some say in the matter. The names of some of his wealthiest patrons—like the royal governor, Thomas Hutchinson—disappeared from his ledgers, but still he did very well until in 1764 there was a terrible depression in Boston.

Being an ingenious man, he taught himself a new trade. During hard times there might be more people who could pay a few pennies for a print than a few pounds for a piece of silver. If he could have sold one of these prints to a modern collector his worries for that year would have been over. They are mostly political cartoons: British ships landing troops in Boston, political enemies hanging by the neck from Liberty Tree, the famous view of the Boston Massacre. His silverwork he loved and in that medium he is a great artist, but his copper-plate engravings seem to have been tossed off by a man more interested in the political situation and in supporting his family than in art. No one has ever called him an artist as an engraver.

There was another trade in which his training as a silversmith would be of help to him. This was setting false teeth. He did not at first advertise that you could chew with these teeth—only talk and smile. A regular doctor would pull the aching tooth and then one went to an artisan like Paul Revere to have a false one wired in. They were usually carved out of hippopotamus teeth, or uncarved animal teeth "of not to perculiar form" were used. Paul Revere did not do this work for

long. His false teeth seem to have been a stopgap both for his patients and for his purse.

Other things interested him more. In 1773 there was that Boston Tea Party. He was one of the known leaders. Boys and men worked all night, saying little except in Indian grunts, breaking open chests of tea, throwing it into the harbor, making, as they said, "salt-water tea." Before Paul Revere had time to go home and get some sleep he was asked to ride to New York and Philadelphia to carry word of the destruction of the tea.

At that time it must have been nearly eight hundred miles for the round trip. Paul Revere did it in eleven days. Although he may have changed horses often, to ride some seventy miles a day is a fair test *of a man's endurance*. During the next year he took the same hard ride at least four more times, and a number of shorter ones. It was not only his hardihood that made Boston choose him so often as express rider. It was necessary to send a man who, when questioned by the excited people, would say the right thing. The Tories referred to him as an "Ambassador from the Committee of Correspondence of Boston to the Congress at Philadelphia," which is as much an overstatement as to call him merely an express rider is understatement.

When Parliament sent troops and warships to close the port of Boston to all shipping until the tea was paid for, Paul Revere began keeping a boat hidden under a wharf so that he could get to the mainland



(Boston was almost an island in his day) and carry word of the British general's plans. He and some other Boston mechanics organized a spy system. They knew that sometime General Gage would move his troops out of Boston and attempt to capture the war materials the colonists were collecting in inland towns. They watched and listened and interested the small boys of Boston in watching and listening. So it was a boy working in a stable who overheard the British plans to march next day to Concord and Lexington. The child ran to tell Paul Revere. The Patriots were expecting some such sortie. Their plans were carefully made. Lanterns were to be hung in the steeple of Old North Church—one lantern if the British left Boston by land and two if by sea. And Paul Revere had promised to get out of town with a more detailed account of what the British were up to if he could slip past their guards. Billy Dawes also rode that night, but as Revere was the first to reach Lexington and had the more exciting trip it is about him Longfellow wrote the poem and he is the messenger best remembered today.

All through the eight years of the Revolution, Paul Revere did whatever seemed most necessary for carrying on the war. When paper money was needed, he printed that. When powder was short (as it usually was), he made plans for a powder mill and he worked on cannon. Much of the time he was a lieutenant colonel of the Boston Artillery Train, stationed at Castle Island. It was the most important fort pro-

tecting Boston in those days, but now is part of the mainland. But it is not as a soldier, but as a civilian and an artisan that he made his greatest reputation and served his country best.

After the war was over, he found out how to manufacture a great many things which before had been imported from Europe. It was then he cast those beautiful church bells which still ring in New England steeples—to the glory of God and Paul Revere. But perhaps the greatest service Paul Revere did for his young country was the prosaic, unsung setting up of a copper mill to roll sheet copper. We were waging an undeclared war with France and paying tribute to the North African pirates. England was watching with an understandably jaundiced eye, and yet (until Revere set up his rolling mill) we could not build a single warship without importing the sheet copper for sheathing the bottom of the ship. Not one man in America knew how to make a copper amalgam suitable for this work. The old gentleman (for he was sixty-five when he went into this new venture) experimented until he found out. He risked every cent he had or could borrow—and succeeded, and we read in the log of *Old Ironsides* how “the carpenters gave nine cheers, which was answered by the seamen and calkers, because they had in fourteen days completed coppering the ship with copper made in the United States,” by Paul Revere.

When he died, in 1818, all the newspapers wrote of his enterprise, industry, generosity, ingenuity. But

none of them mentioned the one thing we know best about him—that ride on the 18th of April. They, who had so recently seen the stocky, benevolent old colonel walking the streets of Boston, never guessed that he was destined to forever ride a foaming charger through the dark of a famous night until in time he hardly seemed a real man at all—only a hurry of hooves, a knock on a door, a disembodied voice crying the alarum.



# Henry David Thoreau

1817-1862

by

Henry Seidel Canby

IF YOU HAD ASKED THE FARMERS OR THE TOWNSMEN OF Concord, Massachusetts, what Henry Thoreau had done to be called a representative American, or even to be remembered outside of Concord, you would have got some pretty uncomplimentary answers. This wood wanderer and lyceum lecturer, who had got himself through Harvard somehow, and begun to teach school in the town—only to drop it for no apparent occupation at all except tramping the fields and rowing on

the river—he puzzled them and his growing fame puzzles some of their descendants. Even Ralph Waldo Emerson, the local celebrity, who lived in the big white house and was an intellectual aristocrat, thought of his best friend as a poet, which he never quite became, and as an eminent naturalist, which, in a scientific sense, he never, or hardly ever, was.

And yet it is certain that Thoreau has earned his place among the leading Americans in our history, and not only in our literary history. *Walden*, the book in which he told of his life as a hermit on next to nothing a year in a house built by his own hands on the shore of Walden Pond, has given him a secure place among the vital authors of the nineteenth century. It is the classic of living alone and liking it. But neither authorship of a famous book nor a distinguished English style makes of an American someone we need to remember and celebrate in a time of national crisis like these 1940's. This obstinate fellow, who would not live or think like his neighbors, has claims on our attention just now that are stronger than reputation for literary excellence.

Thoreau was tough, tough-bodied in the pioneer sense, disdainful of luxury, oblivious to discomforts; and he was tough-minded in the Puritan sense, refusing to take any man's say-so, really willing to wrestle with ideas, as few are, determined to get at reality. He splashed through swamps, crawled through shrub oak thickets, liked bad weather, and, in his now famous *Journal*, he checked up every day to find out what he

was living for and how to get the most out of it. The American pioneers were of two types, the drifters and the pushers, and Americans have been of these two types ever since. Thoreau was a pusher. As he said in a famous passage in *Walden*:

"I went into the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life. . . . I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life . . . to drive life into a corner and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it . . . ; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it."

But most American pushing had been toward getting rich, or at least making a living. Thoreau was the spokesman of a bolder idea. He wanted to live, as well as make a living. Life for him was not a farm or a house or a woman; life was what you got out of them, or got out of what you did have. He never did get a wife, but that was not entirely his fault, and perhaps fortunate for the wife.

He was the real rugged individualist. The fake one we are too familiar with. He is an individualist because it is profitable for his pocket, and rugged only in the ruthlessness with which he gets his own way and other people's dollars. Thoreau was rugged in the sense that he was willing to simplify his physical wants in order to satisfy them without wasting time. For a man with a job of study, or observing, or thinking to do, making money was too expensive beyond what was

necessary for self-support, and the simpler your desires the sooner you could satisfy them. He had seen too many farmers struggling down the road with mortgaged farms on their backs, too many men who had never stopped to consider what really gave them happiness, but took their ambitions ready-made from the conventions of the community. Concord, said Thoreau, seldom did what it really wanted to do. Has America?

People who want what others think they ought to want, and do what others think they ought to do, seldom get beyond keeping up with the Joneses. What is much worse, they gradually lose that sturdy individualism which enables them to stand up against whatever threatens their liberties, their rights, their sense of the value of human personality. Thoreau, like so many imaginative thinkers, was prophetic. Again and again in his essays and his *Journal* the theme of the despotic totalitarian state appears. Not, of course, by that name. Even when Massachusetts was trying to keep down the abolitionists in the beginning of the struggle over slavery, Thoreau had no real experience with a despotic state. He went to jail once because he would not pay a poll tax to be used, as he feared, to support the Mexican War, which he believed was being waged to extend slavery. But he was let out the next day. He wrote a brilliant and defiant essay about it. At the most it was a token imprisonment. But this Yankee philosopher was so sensitive to the dangers of oppression that you can find a complete program of how an individual can resist the equivalent of Naziism

in his writings a hundred years before the thing was invented. There is no tomfoolery of fanaticism in his attitude. Give the state its dues, don't break your head against forces too powerful for you, learn how best to fight them. When you find a wall behind you, stop, and go back no farther. Life isn't worth having for a man who has given his mind and soul away in return for a slave's security. Plenty of people everywhere have disagreed with this principle, but nobody doubts that it has been at the heart of America, nobody doubts that a nation of Thoreaus is ultimately invincible.

And I still have not got at the essence of Thoreau's character as a memorable American. It is his third outstanding trait that makes him as timely an example of what this country clearly needs as can be found anywhere in our history.

From Thoreau's side of Walden Pond he could see the trains on the newly opened railway hauling backward and forward. Through the great Hoosac Tunnel, which led to the West, they were bringing the products of a rapidly developing continent to the sea. In the other direction, and by the roads also, emigrants were pouring westward, opening up the old Northwest, headed toward the Mississippi, toward Oregon, toward California. Thoreau's friend, Horace Greeley, was saying, "Young man, go West." Do not think that the hermit of Walden did not enjoy all this movement. He preferred himself, as he said, to travel in Concord, but it was not until Tom Wolfe's day that anyone was to write again as stirring an account of



transportation that lifts man and his products and pushes him ahead.

But ahead where? That was Thoreau's question. What were they developing in the West? What were they getting in California? Wheat, corn, gold? Or better men? What was progress? More and bigger towns, or better ones? He doubted the vision of the westward pioneers. He doubted what everyone was calling progress. The country was growing too fast. It was expanding everywhere before men had learned how to get the most out of living at home. It was getting bigger faster than it was getting better. Size and success were getting confused. Strength was beginning to be identified with property. The more gold the more men, the more men the more property, but were they going to be able to hold and use it for the best purposes? He doubted it.

And just so we have been doubting lately whether the immense material success gained by America has been quite the same as progress. We have been wondering whether having made our country the richest in the world we are men enough to protect it. Our materialistic individualism of each man for himself, each partnership, company, and trust for itself, has weakened us. Having got our share of wealth, the idea has been that our share would take care of us. Get the goods, and pay someone to do the thinking and the protecting.

In this year of peril, tens of thousands of Americans have very quietly said, This won't work. They

are of Thoreau's mind, even if they have never read him, or even heard of him. They are realizing that with the world in an armed tumult, the time has come to value simplicity and self-sacrifice, and to think more of the way to live, and how to stay alive at all, than of making a living. Thoreau's words "simplify, simplify, simplify" echo every time we make out an income tax or leave the family for the front. It isn't such a hardship, after all, to get along with fewer luxuries, less transportation, simpler pleasures, if it makes it easier to be a good American and keep the best of what we have got. There is a pleasure in it, for it means living not aimlessly, or just to get richer, but with an objective. We should be thinking more of what we really need and spend our money for, and what we really want to get out of it, than of the money itself. We shall be thinking more of principles and of protection for the country, and less of prosperity for ourselves alone. That was Thoreau's doctrine. Nobody has ever stated it better than he did in *Walden*.

Every preacher on the radio is saying we need a new philosophy of living—for defense, for offense, and for life in a different world after this war. There is plenty of material for one in Thoreau. The best aspect of his philosophy is that while it is belt-tightening it is neither joyless nor sour. His point is that you are happier when you live by principle. That the simple life can be pleasanter than the complicated life, and much more useful. That people seldom get what they really want in a luxurious society or a society where

success and profits mean the same thing. That millions of Americans are going to get more out of standing on their own feet and helping to save our democratic principles than from two cars in a garage and plenty of time to go to the movies. Simplify, because the simple life is good in itself, and very good when it frees your energies to work or fight for a principle.

Perhaps it is too much to say that Thoreau was representative of America. His kind are always in a minority. But it is not too much to say that he spoke better than any other literary celebrity in our history for a tradition of real patriotism and lofty individualism, and lived what he preached.

National morale is a question of the individual. If enough have it, it is strong, but no stronger than its weak links. Hitler speaks to his party or his Germans. Thoreau speaks to you. Everything he said is accomplished by one man or one woman, which means simply that everything in the long run is up to you and what you do about it. Morale, like charity, begins at home. Reform yourself, if you want to help save the country. You will like it. So said Thoreau, and would say so again in 1942.



GROVER CLEVELAND

# Grover Cleveland

1837-1908

by

Allan Nevins



HERE EXISTS A GROUP PICTURE OF Grover Cleveland and his Cabinet taken late in his second term—probably in 1896. Cabinets were smaller then than today, and but eight men were grouped around the president. At one elbow sat Richard Olney, secretary of state, looking with his grim jaw, stern eyes, and generally pugnacious expression like a bulldog ready to spring. At the other elbow sat that keen-minded Kentucky gentleman, John G. Carlisle, a quizzical smile on his craggy, homely features; he was secretary of the treasury, and his incessant troubles gave him a jaded look. Two men in the group were as handsome as actors—the tall Judson Harmon of Ohio, with deep dark eyes and well-chiseled nose and chin,

and the dapper John R. Francis, with a romantic flowing mustache. We might name others in the group; for example, the slight, stooped postmaster general, William L. Wilson, a true scholar in politics. But the most impressive feature of the photograph is the way in which Cleveland dominates it. Squarely in the center he sits, a massive, broad-shouldered, barrel-bodied giant of a man, his huge head thrown well back, his pudgy hands resting on his tremendous knees. His figure, though lacking thrust and alertness, has weight and strength; and the men about him seem puny by comparison.

In much the same fashion Grover Cleveland seems to dominate the whole period of American history between Reconstruction and the Spanish-American War; dominate it not by bold leadership, but by massive weight of character. It was a period of sharp contrasts. For a dozen years the currents of national life ran smoothly; then, under pressure of the hard times after the panic of 1893, they burst up in a geyserlike spout of discontent, class feeling, and radical demand for change. Cleveland first came to the presidency in the midst of the era of placidity, and had one prosperous term to show what he could do for sober, honest, and grimly thorough reform. Then he stood on the side lines for four more years while the skies grew darker. He came back into power just as the tempest burst. In his second term he had to meet a fierce, unyielding depression, riotous strikes, marches of the unemployed, jingo demands for a foreign war, and most dangerous

of all, a determined drive to force the nation to a cheap silver dollar at a time when all the other great nations had a gold-standard currency. In his first administration he had been constructive. In his second, 1893-1897, he had to be doggedly obstructive to forces that he thought sinister. He hardened his will, and gave his whole mental and moral weight to the task.

No student of Cleveland's career has ever felt any doubt as to the principal quality for which the country will always admire him. His courageous adherence to duty, his stubborn insistence upon principle, lifted him above all the mere politicians of his time. He had his faults, and intellectually he was more limited than many contemporaneous figures. He was not imaginative, flexible, or resourceful. But he possessed a clear-eyed common sense that with few errors picked out the right course; and when he had once decided on it, he hewed to the line without regard to pleas, cajolery, or threats—without fear or favor. He was John Bunyan's Valiant-for-Truth transferred to the nineteenth century.

The illustrations of his blunt, undeviating courage are as refreshing as they are numerous. When, as governor of New York, he wanted to prevent the re-nomination of a state senator who had opposed sound legislation, he did not go through the pretense of appealing to the voters of a machine-controlled district. He sent a frank demand to John Kelly, boss of Tammany, and fought the matter out with him to a victorious conclusion. It seemed certain in 1883-1884 that he

would never get the electoral vote of New York State without the support of Tammany, and that he could never become president without the New York electors. Yet he steadfastly opposed Tammany Hall, refused to make a single concession to it in appointments or otherwise, and won votes by the enemies he thus made. When in the heat of the campaign of 1884 a scandal regarding his private life as a bachelor-lawyer some ten years earlier was suddenly sprung upon the country, he was undaunted. "Whatever you do," he telegraphed his stunned friends in Buffalo, "tell the truth." A little later he wrote one of them that the policy of "not cringing" had been the only possible course—and his manly attitude won him admiration and support. Some men advised him that year to take steps to conciliate the Greenback-Labor candidate, who was being covertly aided by Tammany. "I would rather be beaten in this race than to truckle to Butler or Kelly," he declared. He never truckled to anybody. The story is told of an editor who came to the White House, tried to get something from him, and departed, declaring, "He is the greatest man I ever met—and he wouldn't do a single thing I wanted."

More than once, in his unfaltering fidelity to what he thought the right course, he seemed about to wreck himself and his party. In 1890-1891 the West and South, where the Democratic party was strongest, appeared insistent upon the free and unlimited coinage of silver. The Senate twice passed a free-coinage bill, with Democratic members furnishing most of the votes.



Democratic conventions in more than twenty states voted in favor of such action. If Cleveland expected to be renominated for the presidency in 1892, it was apparently necessary for him to fall into line, or at least to keep silent. But expediency in such a matter meant nothing to him. On February 10, 1891, he published his famous "silver letter," in which he flatly warned the country that it would meet disaster if it entered upon the "dangerous and reckless experiment" of free silver coinage. Some thought he had thrown away the presidency. But the courage with which he took a determined stand when no other national leader dared do so actually gave him enhanced strength.

When re-elected president his first step was to force a repeal of the Sherman Silver-Purchase Act which was undermining the existent currency system. In doing this he made so many enemies that passage of a drastically reduced tariff, the reform nearest his heart, became impossible. Yet he did not hesitate over what seemed the larger duty. To keep an adequate gold reserve in the Treasury, he floated bond issue after bond issue against the stormiest opposition. The abuse and threats never daunted him. "I am sure I was never more completely in the right path of duty than I am now," he wrote a friend.

He had a tremendous power of taking punishment, and in the second administration he needed it. He also possessed a capacity for striking heavy blows. Halfway through this second administration, although he knew that he was being accused of disrupting his

party, he unhesitatingly published a letter declaring that Arthur Pue Gorman, Calvin Brice, and other senators who had opposed his plans for a lower tariff were guilty of "party perfidy and party dishonor." In 1898 William Randolph Hearst telegraphed Cleveland that leading naval and military officers, some ex-Cabinet members, many senators, fifteen governors, and more than fifty mayors had accepted membership upon his committee to erect a monument by popular subscription to the dead sailors of the battleship *Maine*. He asked permission to use Cleveland's name. But Cleveland detested Hearst's tactics in demanding a war with Spain, and instantly telegraphed him: "I decline to allow my sorrow for those who died on the *Maine* to be perverted into an advertising scheme for the *New York Journal*."

By the application of his shrewd common sense and his firm love of principle to American affairs, Cleveland accomplished many services to the republic. The greatest of them may be grouped under four headings. In his first administration, undertaking the reform of all the government departments, he restored to many of them an honesty and efficiency which they had lost. The navy, for example, was for the first time given a modern footing; the Interior Department forced the return of vast areas of public land taken from the government. As a second achievement, in both administrations he stood for a fairer taxation system, and in particular did much to educate the public to the need for a lower and more scientific tariff. He

got an improved tariff law, though not so good as the one he wanted; he helped put on the statute books an income tax. Later the tariff went back to high levels again and the Supreme Court annulled the income-tax law. But his work of education persisted.

His third achievement was the maintenance of a high standard of national morality in foreign relations. He refused to let Nicaragua be made a protectorate; he opposed the annexation of Hawaii in 1893 by means that were shown to be unfair and coercive; and he resisted the clamor for war with Spain. Himself upholding the highest ideals in international affairs, he insisted in his treatment of Venezuelan affairs in 1895 that Great Britain should also uphold them. Finally—and this is perhaps his most striking service—he labored successfully, against titanic odds, to maintain what he regarded as a sound monetary system. In years of almost unparalleled depression, hardship, and confusion, his invincible determination alone saved the nation from abandoning its old currency standards and going to a fifty-cent dollar—an abandonment that would have meant heavy loss and perhaps commercial chaos.

A strong president, fitted by his unyielding courage and sterling honesty to face stormy times—so we can remember Grover Cleveland. And it should be added that he never lost faith for a moment in the nation he served. "The American people appreciate a courageous struggle in their defence," he wrote in 1888. Even in the hardest years he felt confident that

any appeal to the country's rectitude and idealism would be answered. "You may be surprised to learn," he wrote a close friend in 1895, when abuse was heaviest, "that in all the darkness I have never lost the feeling that the American people and I have a perfectly fair understanding." He spoke more than once of the "high and noble mission" of American civilization. Courageous himself, he knew that he could trust America to be courageous; a man of the highest sense of duty, he knew that when Americans once saw their duty they would perform it.



# James Lawrence

1781-1813

by

John P. Marquand

"AN ENGLISH FRIGATE IS NOW IN SIGHT FROM MY DECK."  
You are reading some of the last words ever written by Captain James Lawrence, from his cabin aboard his new command, the U.S. Frigate *Chesapeake*, as she lay in Boston Harbor on the morning of June 1, 1813. Above his head he could hear the orders and the scampering of the crew's bare feet as they unmoored. "I have sent a pilot boat out to reconnoitre, and should

she be alone, I am in hopes to give a good account of her before night. My crew appear to be in fine spirits, and I trust will do their duty."

Fashions in thought have undergone many changes since that clear June morning, but these have not altered the language of fighting men. That may be why, when you scan the record of the battle between the *Chesapeake* and her British antagonist, the *Shannon*, you can come close to believing that James Lawrence, Captain U.S.N., might have died yesterday fighting his ship somewhere in the China Sea instead of off the port of Boston more than a century ago.

His ship was already under way, when he finished the last letters he would ever write, and left his cabin for the quarter-deck. Lawrence had dressed meticulously in full uniform because his ship was facing action. There is still extant a portrait by Gilbert Stuart of Lawrence much as he must have looked when he stood on the *Chesapeake's* deck. He was young—only thirty-two—when he died, but men developed fast in those days. With his preceding command, the *Wasp*, he had sunk the British sloop of war, *Peacock*, with a consummate dash that had shocked a complacent British Navy. His face on the canvas still reflects the self-belief required for such a task. The set of the mouth is partly good-natured, partly arrogant, without a line of weakness. The jaw is firm; the hair has that curled and wind-blown look which was the fashion of the period.

He was painted in the same blue coat with heavy

gold lace and gigantic epaulets that he must have worn aboard the *Chesapeake*—its collar so absurdly high that his chin rested snugly in a chokingly large cravat. He wore the navy officer's cocked hat as he stood upon the quarter-deck, a pompous affair, encrusted with its own allowance of gold braid. His white trousers, thrust into top boots, completed a handsome uniform, setting off the tall figure of a very handsome man—a credit to the glistening new paint of the *Chesapeake*, fresh from a thorough overhauling.

During all the time that the great frigate moved past the islands of Boston Harbor, Lawrence's one fear must have been that the Englishman, whose sails he could see close to the horizon, might not be alone. Ship for ship, Lawrence could never have doubted the ultimate results. He had complete faith in American ships and seamen. He was certain that American gunners could make sport of any British gun crew. Yet even so, as a man who had spent his best years at sea, he must have known that there were some things aboard his ship that might have been bettered. He surely would have preferred it if all the *Chesapeake's* crew and gear could have been shaken into place by a few weeks at sea. Instead, some of the crew had come fresh aboard that morning and two of his lieutenants had been midshipmen a week or so before, but such matters would never stop a fighting captain, with the *Shannon* out there in the bay. He did not know, and he did not live to know, that Captain Broke of the *Shannon* had sent him a most courteous note that very

morning giving the weight of his broadside and inviting the *Chesapeake* to come out and fight, leaving it to Lawrence to choose the time and place.

The battle flags were hoisted. A large white flag waved from the forepeak, bearing the legend, "Sailors rights and free trade," our slogan in that war. As the *Chesapeake* passed old Boston Light, Lawrence took a turn about the deck speaking to the crew.

"Bear a hand, boys," he said, "and get your dinner. You will have blood for supper."

When the *Chesapeake* reached the harbor mouth, Lawrence could see the *Shannon* making for the open sea. By three-thirty, when she had the sea room she wanted, she hauled up closer to the wind and began to take in sail. By four, Lawrence ordered the *Chesapeake* to haul up also and fired a gun—an invitation for the struggle to the death. The ships were seven miles apart by then; the afternoon was waning, but there would be sufficient daylight for what they wanted. The *Shannon* waited for him now with just enough way on her to keep her manageable. The *Chesapeake* moved up on the *Shannon's* weather quarter, and the distance was closing fast. The officers and men all stood at general quarters, Lawrence on the quarter-deck with his sailing master, Lieutenant White, and his two midshipmen aides. Lieutenant Ludlow had charge of the spar deck and Lieutenants Budd, Cox, and Ballard were below on the gun deck waiting for their orders, all watching the *Shannon* looming larger every minute.



She was barely moving and the *Chesapeake* was approaching at a good six miles an hour.

Lieutenant White looked at his captain endeavoring to anticipate his thoughts, while Lawrence stood on a gun carriage with his speaking trumpet tucked beneath his arm watching dark figures on the *Shannon's* decks. Lawrence surely knew that he held all the advantages of initiative and maneuver. He could stand well away from his slow-moving antagonist, exchanging broadsides and crossing her bows to rake, or he could cross her stern and deliver a raking fire. The choice was entirely his. Anxiously in those taut, still moments, Lieutenant White tried to guess which it would be and finally he asked his question: Did not the captain intend to run across the *Shannon's* stern? Lawrence said he did not, and then he gave his order, an order which will be debated as long as naval students study fights at sea.

"Luff her," Lawrence called to the quartermaster by the *Chesapeake's* great wheel. The wheel whirled; the *Chesapeake's* sails snapped and slapped in the freshening southwest wind and the gun crews gave three cheers. But it was an unexpected command, for it meant that Lawrence intended to place the *Chesapeake* alongside the *Shannon*, within pistol shot, broadside to broadside, yardarm to yardarm. It meant that Lawrence had cast away all the initial advantage which Broke of the *Shannon* had offered him. He had cast it away contemptuously, out of chivalry perhaps, because he disdained advantage, or it may have been that he

was thinking of the *Hornet* and the *Peacock*, and the poor exhibitions he had seen of British gunnery. Even if he had known that Broke had been training the *Shannon's* gun crews for seven years, one doubts whether he would have changed his order. It was gallant, but it was not war. It was underestimation of an enemy. Other officers that afternoon would have grasped at every chance that fortune gave them. Hull of the *Constitution* would have crossed under the *Shannon's* stern and given her the full taste of his broadside before he came so close.

The ships were now so near that the commands from the *Shannon* could be clearly heard. There was a breathless silence as the *Chesapeake* moved up along the *Shannon's* side, a silence which lasted until the *Chesapeake's* foremast came even with the *Shannon's* mizzen. Then the first gun of the *Shannon* spoke, and then two more, and then the great guns of the *Chesapeake* began to answer as they came to bear.

It was impossible for those who lived through it to give a full account of all that happened in the next minutes beneath the battle smoke, but Lawrence must have known in those first few seconds of shattering confusion that the *Shannon's* gunners were as good as any Yankee. The carnage on his spar deck told the story. It exceeded any he had known in all his years at sea. The air was obscured by the mist of debris and splinters. One hundred of the men who had been at their stations went down before the *Shannon's* fire. In a few mad moments, only fifty were left standing.

It was the loss among his officers which may have lost the fight. His sailing master's head was carried away by a round shot, two of his midshipmen were dead. His lieutenant of marines was down and Ludlow, his first in command, was down. A grenade thrown from the *Shannon* struck an ammunition chest and the smoke of the explosion put down a blinding curtain through which it was impossible to see. Lawrence's white trousers dripped with blood from a pistol bullet which had struck below his knee, and he limped painfully toward the rail to peer at his antagonist. The *Chesapeake* was coming helplessly into the wind owing to the destruction of her rigging forward and her great stern fouled the *Shannon*. Fewer and fewer of the *Chesapeake's* guns could bear, and the *Shannon's* guns raked through her.

When the *Shannon's* carronades played across the spar deck, Lawrence leaned against the starboard binnacle. He did not need his speaking trumpet to give his orders. He shouted for the bugler to give the call for boarders to rush the *Shannon's* deck. When the bugle did not sound, he directed Midshipman McKinney, a lad of fourteen, to jump below and to order the gunners up prepared to board. He must have seen by then that the *Chesapeake's* crew was no longer steady. The ship was new to them. Too many officers were down. He must have seen, as he leaned against the binnacle, the first rush of British, led by Captain Broke, swarming over the *Chesapeake's* rail.

Lawrence stood there, a smoke-stained bloody man

calling for boarders, shouting above the awful noise for action from his crew. Lieutenant Budd was up from the gun deck trying to rally a handful of confused Yankee sailors and marines, and then Lieutenant Budd was down. Next came Lieutenant Cox. Just after Cox reached the deck, a British lieutenant of marines recognized Lawrence, took deliberate aim, and shot him in the groin.

As he lay there, Lawrence shouted to his men to fire away. He was still calling orders when Lieutenant Cox and four seamen were carrying him below. He ordered Cox to return, to get the men in hand.

"Don't surrender the ship." The men remembered Lawrence's words years afterward.

The cockpit was already a welter of maimed and dying men. Dr. Dix, the surgeon, dropped his grim work when he saw the captain.

"Serve those who came before me, doctor," Lawrence said, and he lay there in his agony listening to the sounds above him. The firing on the deck was slackening.

"Go on deck," Lawrence called to Dr. Dix, "order them to fire faster and to fight the ship till she sinks."

Then he saw Lieutenant Ludlow. They were bringing him into that charnel house with his head cloven by a saber cut.

"What brings you here?" Lawrence asked him. Ludlow was still conscious, but very weak. He had to tell his captain that it was all over.

"They have carried her," he said.

"Then the officers have not toed the mark," Lawrence answered. He was convinced that the *Shannon* was as good as whipped when he left the deck.

There was only one thought which rose above the mortal agony of his wound. It framed itself into words so simple and direct that they are still spoken by millions who have forgotten the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake*.

"Blow her up," he said, and he repeated it again and again. "Don't give up the ship. Don't give up the ship."



# George Washington

1732-1799

by

Rupert Hughes

IF WASHINGTON WERE ALIVE IN THESE DAYS—OR IF WE were translated back into his—the problems, the discouragements, the high hopes, the lofty responsibilities to posterity would be much the same. We are now in danger of losing the battle for freedom which he lost so easily and so often and won again with such difficulty and such delay.

George Washington fought more and harder battles against his own countrymen than he was per-

mitted to fight against the foreign enemy. He wrote almost countless letters pleading for preparedness, munitions, conscription of men and moneys, for a real army, a real navy; for national unity and vigor. He would be doing the same thing now if he were alive; and he would be suffering the same defeats, dissensions, and delays that now impede our war of defense and postpone the necessary offensive.

Human nature alters little and relapses constantly to where it was. As the French say, "The more it changes, the more it is the same thing." Mechanical devices like telephones, airplanes, the radio, change us hardly at all. They simply enable more people to get along together somehow, to distress one another incessantly, and to get nowhere in particular a little quicker. There are more people now to solve our problems, but also more to create new problems and impede their solution.

The three million Americans along the Atlantic seaboard in 1776 are greatly multiplied but little changed.

In Washington's time this nation was almost altogether agricultural, but so were the other nations. There was no organized labor then and the lot of the very poor and of the slaves was wretched. But to hear what is said nowadays, labor is still downtrodden and the poor have never got their rights, though the poorest of them have advantages that the richest did not dream of in Washington's day. We are still told that a vast percentage of our people are ill-housed, ill-clothed, ill-

fed, and ill-paid. Perhaps they will always seem to be, because our standards change and covetousness is eternal.

We forget or have never learned that Washington had the support of only a patriotic minority in the building of this nation. The pacifists and isolationists and appeasers of his day nearly wrecked his endeavors. There were at times more native-born Americans in arms and fighting on the side of the British than Washington could ever muster for his own troops.

The majority of them, then as now, were indifferent or complacent, and they ridiculed or opposed Washington when he was alive as the majority of our time have forgotten or ignored the lessons he taught and the appeals he made with all the might of his great soul.

I always suffered when I thought of our half-naked soldiers at Valley Forge, leaving the bloody prints of their bare feet on the snow, sleeping without blankets, dying for lack of medicines and food. And then I learned that their hardships were due not to the poverty of our little country, but to the rapacity and greed of the majority, of the manufacturers who collected money for the shoes and uniforms, then refused to deliver them because they could sell them for higher prices to the civilians; of what Washington denounced as "the avarice of the farmers," who would not even sell our soldiers food; of the politicians who bickered among themselves while the little armies perished or fled from the pursuers.



We hear much of the profiteers of our time in industry, labor, agriculture and politics, and of the indifference of our people. Here is only one of Washington's excoriations of our forefathers after three years of the Revolution had exiled our troops to the bitter hills of Valley Forge:

If I was to be called upon to draw a picture of the times, and of Men; from what I have seen, heard, and in part know I should in one word say that idleness, dissipation and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of most of them. That Speculations, speculation and an insatiable thirst for riches seems to have got the better of every other consideration and almost every order of Men. That party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day whilst the momentous concerns of an empire, a great and accumulated debt; ruined finances, depreciated money, and want of credit (which in their consequences is the want of every thing) are but secondary considerations and postponed from day to day, from week to week as if our affairs wore the most promising aspect.

There was graft in the quartermaster department, the medical department, everywhere. The helpless little army, held together only by the trust in Washington's selfless devotion, was driven hither and yon, supplies arriving too little and too late, and the enemy capturing cities and strongholds while our people wrangled.

When Washington first took command at Boston in 1775, he inquired how much powder there was. When he heard how little, he nearly fainted. Six years later, if the French fleet had not won the sea battle off

Yorktown, Cornwallis would have been famous for his triumph instead of a synonym for surrender.

Washington had his Pearl Harbor—a whole series of Pearl Harbors. At the Battle of Long Island he lost generals by capture. He was himself within an ace of capture at Fort Mifflin. He barely escaped across the Delaware; and even his Christmas Day victory at Trenton was on the verge of disaster to the last.

Very modern, very ancient and very modern, were Washington's difficulties with money, with depreciation and inflation. The sky-rocketing increase of prices played havoc with the equipment of his troops. As he wrote, "a Rat in the shape of a Horse" cost a thousand dollars. Later, in Virginia, a few inferior farm horses were offered to the cavalry at \$35,000 apiece. Uniforms, underclothes, blankets, food—everything rose just as army costs are rising now.

Efforts at price control failed them as usual; but Washington implored action in putting a ceiling on the costs of things, including labor and material of every sort. The Congress of that time, as of this, gave price control much study and the different states held conventions at which solutions were sought.

The eminently practical mind of Washington realized that price control would be impracticable unless heavy taxes were imposed, public and private economy promoted, manufacturers encouraged, and speculators and profiteers punished. These last he called "the murderers of our cause." He believed in

requisitioning what had to be secured when it could not be otherwise acquired.

The question is asked of me: "What have you learned in your studies of the life of Washington which you apply to your daily life?"

Well, he stands to me rather as an ideal to revere than a model that I can hope to imitate. He was a passionate farmer and I am content to be a consumer only. But I can at least share with him his love of the theater, of hospitality, of social graces and amusements, of games, dances, horse races, all the things that make life charming so long as they can be afforded.

Yet nobody could or did endure greater hardships or privations when they were necessary than Washington did. He loved riches and was one of the wealthiest men of his day; but he gave up everything for the cause. He did not see his home for six years and he endured bankruptcy for his nation.

His self-sacrificing patriotism, his meek self-deprecation, his unwillingness to grasp at power, his refusal ever to be anything but the servant of the people, his rage when he was asked to make himself king, his unwillingness to profit in any way from public opportunity, his utter and perfect devotion to the cause of American liberty uplift him in my eyes to godlike heights. He is to me the purest patriot in the history of the world and as soldier, executive, citizen, the everlasting ideal.

His inability to despair or to give up the fight at any time during the eight long years of the war fur-

nishes an inspiration and an assurance much needed in this dark hour.

Washington always felt that the war he waged was not only for the creation and the salvation of the liberties and dignities and opportunities of himself and his contemporaries; but even more for the sake of the generations to come—as he put it often, “for the unborn millions.”

We of today are among those then unborn millions for whom he agonized. We find ourselves in a desperate plight. It is good, it is well to remember how for our sakes Washington and his faithful few endured humiliation, catastrophe on catastrophe, bitter criticism, and even conspiracy against them in their own ranks; how they struggled grimly on until victory had to come because there were no more defeats left.

It is inconceivable that we should betray in this crisis the nation that our ancestors won for us at such cost. It is inconceivable that we should equally betray the unborn millions who must inherit the freedom we have inherited.





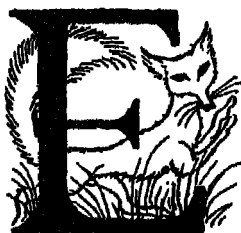
FRANCIS MARION

# Francis Marion

1732-1795

by

Helena Huntington Smith



VERY SO OFTEN THE COURSE OF HISTORY swings a full circle, and a half-forgotten figure steps forward out of the past, seeming as modern as today's headlines, to bring to people engaged in their own great struggle the strangely comforting reminder that others before them have suffered the same doubts and agonies and come through to the final triumph. Such a figure is General Francis Marion, who harried Cornwallis and helped win the American Revolution in the South.

You studied about him in grade school history. You remember him better, if at all, under his nickname, "the Swamp Fox." He gets only a paragraph in the textbooks, and from the 1840's to the present he

has been remembered mainly as a hero of children's tales. But he was probably the greatest guerrilla leader this country has ever produced. He was one of those obstinate characters who don't know when they're beaten, and an utter genius at the kind of warfare that is being waged behind the lines in conquered countries today, in China and parts of Russia and Yugoslavia. He was an eighteenth century Mihailovitch.

"Marion rose in arms when all seemed lost," writes one historian. He broke up supply trains and interrupted communications, he vanished into the cypress swamps and reappeared somewhere else. The very able Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton couldn't catch him, and in a fit of exasperation dubbed him "this damned swamp fox." Marion wasn't strong enough, alone, to free his land from the yoke of a powerful conqueror. It took an expeditionary force from the North, under General Nathanael Greene, to do that. But he kept the flames of revolt crackling behind the lines, and kept King George III's armies from ever possessing the country they had won.

Marion owed his rise to fame to one of the silliest accidents that ever singled out a man of destiny. Early in 1780 his regiment was stationed in Charleston, and Marion went to dine with a number of other officers one night, at the house of a gentleman living on fashionable Trad Street. Even then Sir Henry Clinton was moving in on the city with a big army and fleet, and all the diners knew it—but doomed Charleston was determined to be gay to the last. The gentlemen



drank a great deal. Following a hospitable southern custom, the host locked the door on his guests—"to make sure that they would spare neither his wine nor their own heads," as one early narrator puts it. But the lean little Huguenot officer had had enough drinking. To avoid argument, he took his departure by way of a second-story window—fell, and broke his ankle. A few days later he was ordered out of the city as unfit for duty, before the start of the siege.

All his brother officers who remained were captured, and if they didn't take parole they spent the rest of the war locked up in British prisons. Francis Marion went back to his plantation in a litter, and when redcoats scoured the country like locusts, he hobbled out to the woods and hid.

South Carolina that summer of 1780 was a country as broken, beaten, and dispirited as France since the fall. British armies overran it; after Sir Henry Clinton left it took only 3,000 troops to hold a population of 50,000 in check. The few South Carolina leaders who had escaped capture when Charleston fell were refugees with the Continental forces in the North, while in the country from which they had fled, defeatists jeered at the few patriots who still dared show their colors, and fifth column rumors completed the feeling of hopelessness; Congress, it was said, was planning to hand over South Carolina and Georgia to the British crown, as the price of a favorable peace.

As soon as Marion could be boosted on a horse he set out for North Carolina with his friend and Boswell,

Captain Peter Horry, though "his ankle was still very crazy," as the latter recorded. After weeks spent in hiding the two men were unaware of the mood of the country; both had supposed that the sight of their uniforms would be enough to ensure them hot suppers and warm beds; instead, doors were slammed in their faces and they were told that people without money shouldn't travel. One reluctant host summed up the prevailing attitude:

"I've had enough of this war! King George is good enough for me!"

Captain Horry became fearfully discouraged, and concluded that "our happy days are all gone." Marion didn't think so, and offered an interesting reason.

"The enemy," he said, "holds all the trumps, and if he had the spirit to be generous, we should surely be lost. But he will treat the people cruelly—and that one thing will ruin him and save the country."

He also compared his prostrate land to a man who has swallowed a dose of deadly poison. Give him an anodyne to make him comfortable, said Marion, and he's a dead man, but if you make him sick at the stomach, you save him. Lord Cornwallis soon supplied the emetic, and the unhappy country began to retch.

Some Irish settlers living in Williamsburg County were among the first to fulfill Marion's prediction. Up to now they had gone about their backwoods business as usual, feeling that the war was none of their affair. But now the authorities began to hang their friends, and threaten them with military service for the crown.

Promptly the Irishmen decided that if they were going to fight it would be for their own country, so they organized two companies of cavalry, and looked around for a leader.

Meanwhile the two fugitive officers had fallen in with General Gates, who was marching to the relief of South Carolina with a big army, for those days, of 1,800 militia, plus 900 Continentals under Baron De Kalb. This army was on its way to one of the worst defeats suffered by American forces in the Revolution, but Gates was a military know-it-all, puffed up with confidence, and he wasn't impressed by the two South Carolinians—or by the scarecrow band of patriots they had collected in their travels.

"Their number did not exceed twenty men and boys," wrote Gates's adjutant, "some white, some black and all mounted, but most of them miserably equipped; their appearance was in fact so burlesque; that it was with much difficulty the diversion of the regular soldiery was restrained by the officers."

They had to restrain it only a few days. A commission came from Governor Rutledge for Marion to go and lead the Irishmen.

On the tenth or twelfth of August, 1780, he took command of his new force, and the Williamsburg boys gathered around for a look at their general. They saw a slight, swarthy, hook-nosed man of forty-eight, who still limped from his fall from the window, wearing "a close round-bodied crimson jacket of a coarse texture, and a leather cap, part of the uniform of the Sec-

ond Regiment, with a silver crescent in front, inscribed with the words 'Liberty or Death.' "

On his side, he looked over two companies of men, whose straggling unkempt hair and rough homespuns contrasted strangely with the slim-legged horses they rode. There were two hundred of them—two hundred gaunt-gutted swamp dodgers who could ride like centaurs and shoot the eye out of a squirrel at the top of the tallest pine—if they had guns and ammunition. At present they were short on these essentials. Marion spent the first few days raiding the sawmills for saws, which were beaten into sabers by rough-and-ready camp blacksmiths.

Their first action was to surprise and defeat a British guard coming to Charleston with a hundred and fifty American prisoners from the rout at Camden. They took back the prisoners, but of these sullen and discouraged remnants of Gates's army, *only three* would re-enlist with Marion. The rest flatly refused to fight any more.

But Marion's men fought. They fought with bird-shot for want of bullets. They often went into action with less than three rounds of ammunition to the man. Until they had supplied themselves with captured material, half of them, at the start of a fracas, would be standing by, waiting for friend or foe to fall so they could grab a gun and get into it. There is a gaiety about the exploits that have come down to us, burnished by legend, but still ringing with essential truth. One day a major in the Williamsburg contingent was

galloping after a fleeing Tory down a country road, when he rounded a turn and ran into a large group of his victim's friends. The South Carolina Irishman did some fast thinking.

"Come on, boys! Here they are!" he yelled to a band of imaginary followers.

It worked. The Tories scattered.

Another time Marion sent four or five of his brightest boys on a scouting mission around the enemy stronghold at Georgetown, on the wide waters of Win-yaw Bay. En route they fell in with the Demon Rum, who inspired them with the notion that, instead of reconnoitering Georgetown—hell, they would take it. . . . So they spurred their horses and clattered straight into town, whooping and shooting. Very luckily, they were gone again before the startled garrison realized what was happening.

Such performances as that were a sore trial to their commander, who had trials enough. After each fight his force melted away. His men had all left wives and children in their little cabins in the clearings, and all over the countryside the enemy was looting and burning. When they became anxious for the safety of their families, Marion had to let them go, and wait, reduced to inaction, until they returned. Sometimes the wait was long and maddening, and their leader became bitterly discouraged. But they always came back.

Once, a year before this, when he and his friend Horry had been drilling a batch of militia outside of Charleston, Horry complained bitterly of the gawky

citizen soldiers, who remained a rabble of individuals despite all his efforts to turn them into an army.

"Pshaw, you don't understand them!" said Marion, and then proceeded to give this extraordinary piece of military philosophy. "When you see them in high spirits, with fire in their eyes, then is your time, dash on, and they'll follow you. But if they begin to run, don't fly into a passion with them. No, you must learn to run as fast as they do and faster—so you may get out in front and rally them."

No wonder they called him "a genius with militia." No wonder his "rabble" would follow him blind. It was said of him that he expected his men to run away—but not too far to come back again. He never wasted their lives in vain military gestures. He taught them to fight like Indians, from tree to tree.

"I never saw such shooting in my life," said one unhappy red-coated colonel, who had set out to chase Marion but was chased by him instead, through a weary winter's campaign.

These boys were tough. They had to be. They lived on a diet of roasted sweet potatoes; for long periods they were without salt; they slept on the ground with one blanket apiece. The general didn't even have one. He had lost his when his brush bed burned up one night, and was in no hurry to replace it. Though the least theatrical of men, he may have wanted to set an example. He was compared to a certain Highland chieftain, "who, seeing that one of his men had rolled up a ball of snow for a pillow, broke

it to pieces with a kick, saying he would not stand for such luxury among his followers."

On one occasion a young British officer came to him to discuss an exchange of prisoners. He was blindfolded and led a twisting route, deep into the recesses of a cypress swamp, and there, at the end of the discussion, he was invited to dinner. The menu, as usual, was roasted yams.

"Is this your customary fare, general?" cautiously inquired the visitor, when he saw that nothing more was forthcoming.

Gravely the general affirmed that it was rather better than usual, since there was more of it. The officer pursued his inquiries as to his host's pay, only to learn that neither he nor his men received any. According to the patriot historian who told the tale, the young Englishman was so impressed by the futility of fighting against such heroes that he went back and threw up his commission!

At the end of 1780 General Greene arrived from the North, sent down by Washington, and from that time forward Marion was part of a regular force and acted under Greene's orders. But part of the time Greene was out of the state, in retreat before Cornwallis's superior force, and for months at a time the Swamp Fox was again carrying on alone. His was a war of nerves. He popped up out of nowhere and fell on loaded supply trains; he pounced, Indianlike, upon sleeping camps in the heavy hours before dawn. One of his favorite tricks was that old Indian stratagem of pre-

tending retreat; to lure the enemy into an ambush. When his mischief was done he vanished so completely into the secret ways of the swamps that his own men could scarcely find him.

Peter Horry spent all the rest of his life in an afterglow of reminiscence, and to Peter mainly we owe the tales of incredible rides that began at sunset and ended at dawn; of splashing through deep black streams in the dead of night, with men who couldn't swim recklessly trusting to horses who could. Marion had no use for bridges. Once on a creek called Black Mingo, he had lost a lot of men because the sound of the horses' feet on the planks had warned the enemy. After that, if he was forced to use a bridge, he made his men put their blankets down to deaden the sound. He was one man who never made the same mistake twice.

His methods of warfare made a painful impression on his opponent, the aforementioned colonel. This gentleman later "told a dreadful story about Marion and his damned rebels, who would not as he said sleep and fight like gentlemen, but like savages were eternally firing and whooping around him by night; and by day waylaying and popping at him from behind every tree as he went by."

By the end of 1781 it was practically over. Lord Cornwallis had surrendered in Virginia. General Greene, helped by Marion and other southern free lances, had retaken South Carolina bit by bit, until only Charleston remained in British hands. But it was not until December, 1782, that the white sails of the



invaders' fleet were spread to the breeze that carried them out of Charleston Harbor. Francis Marion, now fifty years old, went home to salvage his war-wrecked plantation. Shortly afterward he married "an elderly spinster cousin"—a slight, lively lady near his own age, who loved him, looked after him, and shared his outdoor tastes—even to going camping with him, in the summertime. He died on his plantation at the age of sixty-three.

But that isn't the end of the story. For years and years after that the bright ghosts of "Marion's men" rode through the Carolina countryside, and the legends multiplied, and old men's eyes lit up and their tongues were loosened at the mention of his name.

Today his exploits are fresher than ever. They are being relived in half a dozen languages all over the world.



# Carl Schurz

*1829-1906*

by

Wendell Willkie

AS A BOY I LEARNED TO REVERE THE NAME OF CARL Schurz, for my father regarded him as a very great man. Later when I read the full record of his life, I found qualities in him perhaps not wholly admirable; an excess of zeal that could wear out his friends' patience, an egotism that offered fine material for the cartooners. But I also found ample confirmation of my father's faith. For the record shows that throughout Carl Schurz's long and useful career, his tongue and

pen were constantly and vigorously active on behalf of human liberty and honest government.

Although he held public office only ten years out of his seventy-seven—six years as United States senator from Missouri and four years as secretary of the interior in the Cabinet of President Hayes, with a brief period earlier as minister to Spain—he left an enduring mark on American history. He contributed mightily to four major achievements: the abolition of slavery, the preservation of the Union, civil service reform, and the battle against inflation after the Civil War. He was also a pioneer in the program for conservation of our natural resources, our “first conservationist.” He protested the exclusion of the Chinese from naturalization and worked hard for just legislation toward others who might, like himself, seek opportunity in the United States. And with social and economic wisdom he argued that the happiness and well-being of the world would be enlarged by freely flowing trade.

Like so many other German liberals in the middle of the nineteenth century, Carl Schurz, then a mere boy, took an active part in the unsuccessful German revolution of 1848 and later turned to the New World as the hope of human freedom when the cause of liberalism and democracy seemed lost in Europe. His fellow citizens of German birth or extraction revered him always as their outstanding champion and mentor. He never let them down and he never let them forget that they owed their primary allegiance to the United States. His political enemies often tried to make capi-

tal of his German origin, but it never did them much good because his unreserved loyalty to the best interests of America was too apparent.

Even before he came to this country, young Schurz had dramatically demonstrated his courage and initiative. During his student days at the University of Bonn he had been especially influenced and inspired by the teachings of Professor Gottfried Kinkel, who was one of the intellectual leaders of the revolution. When the popular uprising on behalf of parliamentary government and a united Germany was crushed by Prussian troops, Schurz escaped to Switzerland, but Kinkel was wounded and captured and sentenced to life imprisonment in a "house of penal servitude." His wife, having spent a year in futile attempts to secure his release, *finally wrote to Schurz, begging him to rescue her husband, his old teacher.* Schurz's romantic and adventurous nature was fired by the thought of such a task and he spent months in preparation for it. Finally, after a daring coup, he succeeded in eluding the Prussian guards and by relays of horses and a tempestuous voyage across the North Sea, brought Kinkel safe to Scotland. The story spread quickly and he found himself an international hero at the age of twenty. When he reached America his fame had preceded him.

A born crusader for what he believed to be right, Carl Schurz soon became an ardent participant in American politics and in the slavery dispute which was then approaching a climax. Unable to speak a single English sentence when he arrived in 1852, in a few

years he became one of the most brilliant orators in the country with a use of the language that was fluent and lucid. By 1860 he was a national figure and he played an important, even a decisive, role in Lincoln's election. He worked for that election with devotion and untiring exertion, speaking and debating throughout the country. For he regarded that Republican campaign as a cause, a "revolt of the popular conscience against what was felt to be wrong." It was characteristic of his courage and his vision that he should warn slaveowners in Missouri: "Your system is founded upon forced labor, ours upon free labor."

Lincoln appreciated the judgment and moral force of this new citizen and discussed with him the draft of his inaugural address.

When Schurz was named minister to Spain by Lincoln, his spirit soon chafed under diplomatic inactivity. He hastened home as soon as possible after the Civil War broke out, helped to raise troops of German descent and was commissioned a brigadier general in the Union Army. His military career was not especially brilliant, but neither was it as ineffectual as his enemies charged, and the fact that he never tried to exploit his war record after hostilities were over and never used his military title tells us something about the man.

In the Reconstruction period, Schurz's hot eagerness to uphold the rights of the Negroes led him at first into the camp of the vindictive radicals headed by

Thaddeus Stevens. He vehemently criticized President Andrew Johnson's policy of "leniency" toward the South. Later, however, when he grasped the complex problems involved, his attitude became more moderate, although he never abated in the slightest his insistence upon justice and equal opportunity for all, regardless of race, creed, or color. But he realized that the Union had not been saved as long as one half of it suffered bitter discrimination, and he urged Hayes to appoint to his Cabinet some man of Confederate antecedents to represent the viewpoint of the South.

The political career of Carl Schurz was marked by unusual integrity, and devotion to principle rather than to party. He was the first great American political independent. His early Republican affiliations did not tie him down when he felt that the party organization was in the wrong. For he regarded a party as a means "of promoting the execution of certain measures of public good." When it failed to perform this function, he looked elsewhere for the instrument through which he might work. In every election he exerted his powerful influence for whichever candidate was on the right side of the issues that seemed to him most important at the time. He was the close friend and adviser of three presidents—Lincoln and Hayes, who were Republicans, and Cleveland, a Democrat.

After campaigning for Grant in 1868, Schurz was elected to the United States Senate and his pledge to himself describes his record:

"I recorded a vow in my own heart that I . . . would never be a sycophant of power nor a flatterer of the multitude; that if need be, I would stand up alone for my conviction of truth and right; and that there would be no personal sacrifice too great for my devotion to the Republic."

His career on Capitol Hill was marked by outspoken criticism of the low moral tone, nepotism and corruption that surrounded the Grant administration. He became an insistent advocate of civil service reform, clean government, and abolition of the "spoils system." Naturally, the professional politicians didn't like him. They managed to freeze him out at the end of his senatorial term and he was never elected again to public office.

Thoroughly disgusted with Grant and the Republican regulars, he warned them that "the only way to preserve the vitality of the Republican party is to make it the party of progressive reforms." Getting no action, he himself launched a Liberal Republican party in 1872. It attracted quite a following, but the convention got out of the hands of Schurz and his friends and nominated the quixotic Horace Greeley for president. Schurz didn't care much for the choice but supported the candidate as preferable to Grant and the narrow-visioned Congressional group around him. Greeley was snowed under in the election and Schurz's critics made merry.

But Schurz was a hard man to discourage. He

kept right on fighting to bring enlightenment to the Republican leadership. In 1876 he was instrumental in blocking the nomination of its "plumed knight," James G. Blaine, whom Schurz frankly regarded as a particularly low form of political life. The compromise choice was Rutherford B. Hayes. Schurz campaigned for him against Tilden, the Democratic candidate, because he felt Hayes would do a better job on civil service.

The crusader was not disappointed. Hayes, one of the most underestimated of our presidents, greatly extended the civil service principle, gave self-government back to the South, and restored sound money. As his secretary of the interior, Schurz had an opportunity to exercise his humanitarian instincts for the benefit of the Indians and made the most of it.

He went out of office with Hayes, but the high point of Carl Schurz's career was reached in 1884. Up to that time he was still regarded as a Republican, perhaps even by himself, despite his defection for Greeley. But the G.O.P. finally nominated Blaine and that was too much for Schurz to swallow.

The Democrats chose Grover Cleveland, who as governor of New York had lived up to his slogan that public office is a public trust. Schurz led the "Mugwumps" (independent Republicans) in his support. The regulars—including young Teddy Roosevelt—called Schurz every name they could think of but his sharp and clever tongue gave back two for one. Though they tried to ridicule his group by describing



it as "a strange political animal that sits on the fence with its mug on one side and its wump on the other," that "strange animal" swung the election for Cleveland.

Schurz never even professed loyalty to any party after that. He called his political shots strictly as he saw them. Sometimes he felt it was a choice between two devils. He backed McKinley in 1896, despite his distaste for the reactionary Republican high-tariff policy, because he distrusted Bryan and his free-silver heresy. However, he was on Bryan's side in 1900, much as he disliked him, because he could not tolerate the McKinley-Roosevelt brand of jingoistic "imperialism."

Anti-imperialism was a cardinal point in Schurz's political creed. He would have been glad that we finally set a date for Philippine independence and would have pointed to the Filipinos' valiant fighting for freedom on Bataan as proof that he was right.

While Schurz was active in many causes, civil service reform was always his favorite child. He carried on that fight almost singlehanded for years. To the end of his life he tried his best to get each successive president to see the light—and he made progress. Americans who believe in clean government owe Carl Schurz a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Sometimes, to be sure, his single-minded devotion to causes was a trifle irksome to his friends. As Lincoln and Cleveland learned to know, Schurz was never the man to be sparing with his counsel. Cleveland in particular became annoyed with his self-

appointed adviser's incessant harping on the civil service theme. And even Lincoln once lost patience with his persistent criticism from the field of the government's conduct of the war and wrote him: "Be assured, my dear Sir, there are men . . . that think you are performing your part as poorly as you think I am performing mine."

Schurz's opponents called him dogmatic, which was probably true, but his dogma was intolerant only of dishonesty and oppression.

At a time when party regularity was considered the primary political virtue, he demonstrated that there was a place in public life for men who sincerely felt that the national welfare was more important than partisan advantage or expediency. He understood the need for party organizations, but he never subscribed to the idea that party interests should transcend public interests.

The long, gaunt figure and defiant red beard of Carl Schurz were familiar to three generations of Americans. Many idolized him and some hated him, but every honest man respected him. After he died, in 1906, a memorial service was held for him in Carnegie Hall, New York. The three principal speakers were Grover Cleveland, ex-president of the United States, President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, and the great colored leader Booker T. Washington.

Carl Schurz found America the land of freedom and opportunity and he gave all his talents and energies to increasing that freedom and that opportunity

for the less fortunate. Negroes and Indians and the foreign-born knew that he had always raised his powerful voice to save them from injustice when too many others were callously indifferent. He stands in the vanguard of American leaders as a champion of human rights. His whole life proved that true Americanism is a matter of spirit, not of birth.



# Benjamin Cardozo

1870-1938

by

Fannie Hurst

ONE ORTHODOX TRADITION IN WHICH WE MIGHT BEGIN, is that Benjamin Nathan Cardozo was born in May, 1870, died in 1938. We might then proceed to fill in between with the progressive narrative of the stages by which he became one of the outstanding chief justices in the history of his country.

If the imprint of this liberated and liberating mind is not yet fully stamped into the heart of all

America, it is because Benjamin Cardozo's significance has not yet had time to work its way to the core of public realization. But the indelible influence on the legal history of the United States of this man, whose achievements are of international importance, is nevertheless already subtly interwoven into the life of the man in the street and the child in the schoolroom.

Because one Benjamin Cardozo passed this way, their way of life is more securely protected from many of those forces of injustice which are so destructive to democracy. Because Benjamin Cardozo cared passionately about human rights and their hairline determinations, girls and boys in school who never heard of him are going to profit by the important circumstances that an American lad, a quiet student and zealot, burned with the flame of self-dedication.

One day there arrived simultaneously at a railway station in New York City the late Madame Curie, codiscoverer of radium, and a famous motion-picture star. The little Frenchwoman slipped unnoticed through the crowd, which made a rush to acclaim the movie queen. Although Madame Curie was recognized, her magnitude was too vast for the crowd to understand, and so she was allowed to slip unnoticed on her way. That she preferred it so is beside the point. It was rather a pathetic spectacle.

In a way, although he was eclectically piled high with honor during his lifetime, Chief Justice Cardozo slipped through the general scene in much that same unostentatious manner.

The historic path of his progress from practice of law in New York City, first by way of the Supreme Court of New York, to the Supreme Court of Washington was made by a man with a seven-league mind. so his seven-league boots are a not unnatural consequence. According to Charles Evans Hughes, Jr., Mr. Justice Cardozo was a "walking encyclopedia of the law," whose amazing memory for erudite facts, coupled with judicial genius, destined him inevitably for high place.

His superlatively valuable opinions on the bench of the Supreme Court of New York State and on the Supreme Court in Washington, his historic technique of dispensation of justice, both in Albany and in Washington, do not readily capture the imagination of the man in the street.

It is only as the Cardozo wisdoms begin to infiltrate into the bloodstream of American judicial behavior, that America-on-the-sidewalks will begin to be unconsciously aware that a great liberator has passed its way.

That infiltration is already taking place.

And so the logical and undramatic stages, through which this young fellow, by way of schooling, scholarship, practice of law, and gargantuan application, made trail to that solemn Olympus known as the Supreme Court of the United States, need to be as undramatic in the telling as they were in the manner of achievement.

Apparently all the world loves a modest man,

particularly when the quality resides, as it so frequently does, within the spirit of one who has the grace to grow big simply, instead of simply big. Benjamin Nathan Cardozo had that grace.

His death only a few years ago has scarcely allowed time to enroll him properly in his inevitable place in the hierarchy of noble and ennobling Americans.

Already, however, this quiet gentleman of Sephardic Jewish ancestry which dates back to our colonial times of 1664 has taken his place in the not overcrowded corridor of America's Pantheon, as exponent of those qualities of prudence, jurisprudence, mercy, and humanity to mankind which his fellow Americans love and reverence.

This scholar of no flamboyance, no Iliadic exploits, and who never did a pretentious thing in his important life, has not only liberalized American judiciary by way of his reverent yet progressive interpretation of the Constitution, he has added immeasurably to its stature.

It should interest millions of young boys, to whom the life of such a man is a guarantee of the potential grandeur in all of us, to visualize the normalcy of this American fellow as he lived his boyhood in his home, private schools, and Columbia University in New York City. They have reason to feel a sense of national pride in the fact that Benjamin Cardozo grew naturally out of their own soil, as germane to it as

those giant redwood trees which rear themselves in our California forest.

Born into a refined home in New York City on May 24, 1870, he was not, however, exactly of that tradition so dear to the American heart. This gentle child came of the gentle stock of a long and honorable family. American Cardozos, to say nothing of antecedent Cardozos of Spain, Portugal, Holland, and England, include bankers, writers, rabbis, patriots, and painters.

The verses of Benjamin Cardozo's cousin, Emma Lazarus, "Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I'll lift my lamp beside the golden door," are written in bronze across the base of the Statue of Liberty.

So too, in turn, is written across the sacrosanct scroll of those Americans who have walked in beauty of mind, spirit, or valor the name of Emma Lazarus's boy-cousin, Benjamin Cardozo.

It is simultaneously mystifying and interesting to note that the slim and scholarly boy Ben, as he grew up in the Madison Avenue house of his widowed father, where he was lovingly mothered by an older sister, was not appreciably different, when it came to worldliness, from the encyclopedic sage, Justice Benjamin Cardozo, of older growth and a long line of degrees and honorary recognitions, who was to bring a new dimension of erudition to the Supreme Court bench.

Not even a lifetime of study, philosophical contemplation, and profound authorship and high honors



succeeded in transforming the young student into a worldly sophisticate.

He remains (Benjamin Cardozo never married) one whose life must have been brilliantly lighted from within by a mind tirelessly dedicated to liberating itself and the mankind it served.

It is amusing and ironic that Horatio Alger should at one time have been tutor to a lad whose exploits were to be confined to the scholarly adventures of an inquiring and brilliant brain and whose brawn resided in a gigantic capacity for work.

Frail, he burned the candle of his strength at both ends, using the midnight oil freely, especially when decisions that involved human destinies were concerned. The scales of justice upon which he weighed his opinions were delicate and he used them with a split-hair perception.

Men, past and present, of Benjamin Cardozo's profession, his colleagues, his friends, knew why his spoken and written opinions had both the chastity and the dignity of precision. Men to come will know why. A chaste and dignified mind arrived at them by slow, scholarly, and liberal procedure.

Nor was it a mind fed entirely from the channels of his own learned profession. He was an intellectual archaeologist, reading Greek and Latin for pleasure and storing his rich findings into a memory that seldom failed him. This grace of intellect combined with a grace of pen formed an arch of lucky stars for American judiciary and liberalized thinking.

This portrait of the man whose written opinions, drafted in quality of mercy, high judgment, and the austere perfection of the use of the English language, is the formal one.

Not so formal is the picture of the man at home in the quiet environment presided over by his doting sister. Not so formal is the Benjamin Cardozo who, not athletic-minded, nevertheless took part in his class rush. Not so formal, yet once more smacking of inevitable high courage, is the picture of that Benjamin Cardozo who, wounded in the secret places of his heart when his father committed certain irregularities, made deathless resolve to erase this blot from the family name.

That he succeeded is in the high tradition of Chief Justice Cardozo.

This dogged intent and purpose to clear the family name is practically the sole heroic gesture on his record. That he never thought of it in that way, or perhaps never thought of it at all except as his debt to a humanity he loved and to a family he loved, is again in the tradition of Benjamin Cardozo.

Retreating from the rewards of his virtues, he seems destined to become a classic example of the world finding its way to the door of the maker of that first-rate mousetrap.

It is fair to assume, however, even at this present, that less than a majority of American men and women in the American streets are sufficiently aware of his imprint upon their time, their circumstances, and their

country. Inevitably though, in spite of himself, the brightly burning flame of his spirit is becoming more and more apparent to our hurly-burly generation.

It is heartening to think of this lad, whose opinions were to become ethical signposts in our national life, springing so naturally out of that strange hard soil, the asphalt of an American metropolis.

If Benjamin Cardozo had been confronted with the choice of the color of ink with which he would prefer to leave his profound signature upon his day and age, it is fairly safe to assume that he would have selected invisible ink.

Call Cardozo's an undramatic life, if you will. As such precepts go, it was. There is no doubt that he walked closely in the shadow of the walls that contained his privacy. To be sure, recognition did beat its path to his door, but the impact of Cardozo against the society he was to enrich was gentle.

"The important thing," he said, with some of this gentleness, "is to rid our presuppositions so far as may be, of what is merely individual or personal, to detach them in a measure from ourselves, to build them not upon instinct, or intuitive likes or dislikes, but upon an informed and liberal culture."

"Precedent" is either the dead hand, the atrophied hand, the wise or the compassionate hand of yesterday, reaching from the past. Judge Cardozo dared to evaluate precedent for precisely what it was worth, respecting it when it had life and validity, not hesitating to

push it aside when it became a dead hand from the grave of outgrown circumstances.

These are not easy wisdoms to achieve. They exact the toll and anguish of long hours of deep research into the heart, profound courage and impeccable integrity of purpose. In such an intellectual laboratory the scholar and gentleman Cardozo distilled his Opinions.

Americans today, hurrying about their pattern of life, are the more secure because in our recent past a man of long ancestry, ancient race, and with reverence for the dignity of human liberty impeccably regarded justice as an American birthright.

He walked in beauty.



# Abraham Lincoln

1809-1865

by

Carl Sandburg

WHAT WOULD LINCOLN DO NOW? THIS QUESTION IS heard. It is asked sometimes as though it could be answered in a few well-chosen words.

What did Lincoln do then—when he was alive and had many of the powers of a dictator? That, too, is a question. Often nobody but himself knew beforehand what he was going to do. And when he did it what happened? Take a look back and see what hap-

pened. We have a right to say there were times when what he did looked wrong to good men then.

To the men of his own party in Washington in early 1864 Lincoln looked wrong. Not a member of the United States Senate spoke out for him as good enough to have another term.

There were, as men go, some mighty good men in that Senate. But opinion at the national capital agreed with the *Detroit Free Press* correspondent at Washington writing: "Not a single senator can be named as favorable to Lincoln's renomination for President." The Illinois senator, Lyman Trumbull, always keen in reading political trends, wrote to a friend in February of '64: "The feeling for Mr. Lincoln's re-election *seems* to be very general, but much of it I discover is only on the surface. You would be surprised, in talking with public men we meet here, to find how few, when you come to get at their real sentiment, are for Mr. Lincoln's re-election. There is a distrust and fear that he is too undecided and inefficient. . . . You need not be surprised if a reaction sets in before the nomination, in favor of some man supposed to possess more energy."

This was the mild comment of an extraordinarily decent politician and statesman. What other senators of Lincoln's own party were saying and writing was neither mild nor decent. Thus the Senate. What of the House of Representatives? There only one member took the floor to say Lincoln was worth keeping in the White House.

A Pennsylvania editor visiting Washington said to Thaddeus Stevens, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and Republican party floor leader, "Introduce me to some member of Congress friendly to Mr. Lincoln's renomination." Stevens took the editor to the desk of Isaac N. Arnold of Chicago, saying, "Here is a man who wants to find a Lincoln member of Congress. You are the only one I know, and I have come over to introduce my friend to you." "Thank you," said Arnold. "I know a good many such and I will present your friend to them, and I wish you, Mr. Stevens, were with us." Thus the very scrupulous Arnold recorded the incident. The other friends of Lincoln in Congress to whom Arnold referred were not named by him nor did their wish to continue Lincoln as president show in their speeches.

Isaac N. Arnold, once a country schoolteacher in New York State, city clerk of Chicago in 1837, a practicing attorney-at-law, early in January of '64 took the floor to quote from Lincoln's "House Divided" speech, holding it prophetic, bold, honest, characteristic of "the man who, then obscure, has become already today, the foremost character in American history." Toward saving the Union, Lincoln had "labored and toiled through difficulties and obstacles known only to himself and God," said Arnold. "The great fault of his administration, the too tardy removal of incompetent men, has arisen from a too scrupulous care to be just."

Speaking to panels of skeptical faces, Arnold went on: "He has borne censure and denunciation for acts

for which others were responsible, with a generosity which has extorted from his rivals the declaration, 'Of all men, Mr. Lincoln is the most unselfish.' I ask the ardent and impatient friends of freedom to put implicit faith in Abraham Lincoln. If you deem him slow, or if you think he has made mistakes, remember how often time has vindicated his wisdom. The masses of the people everywhere trust and love him. They know his hands are clean and his breast is pure. The people know that the devil has no bribe big enough, no temptation of gold, or place, or power, which can seduce the honest heart of Abraham Lincoln. They know that while he is President there is no danger of a coup d'état . . . that their liberties and laws are safe in his hands. You have a Chief Magistrate somewhat rude and rough, it may be, but under this rough exterior you have the real and true hero."

And what light does this give us on what Lincoln would do now? About all we learn for sure is that he would expect trouble with Congress all the time and the best he could hope for would be to keep a smoldering volcano of impatience and frayed nerves from erupting into a volcano of straight-out antagonism. Lincoln so managed that he never got into open hostilities with the main body of Congress.

"The opposition to Mr. Lincoln," wrote Indiana Republican Congressman George W. Julian later, "was secretly cherished by many of the ablest and most patriotic men of the day." Thaddeus Stevens in a letter written in '64 showed the mixed motives of



himself and associates: "How little of the rights of war and the law of nations our Pres't knows! But what are we to do? Condemn privately and applaud publicly!"

And from this we learn that men who regard themselves among the ablest and most patriotic men of the day can privately cherish opposition they can't make public. We learn further that Lincoln now would expect to be dealing regularly with men as forthright and ruthless as Thad Stevens, who knew how to "condemn privately and applaud publicly."

Then how, against this smoldering and almost unanimous opposition in Senate and House, did Lincoln win renomination? By a national convention at Baltimore in June of '64 unanimous for him, the delegates responsive to a feeling among the mass of voters that Lincoln had handled a tough job pretty well and was worth another term in the White House. In March of '64 a Chicago newspaper had carried a paragraph: "A sturdy farmer from Oskaloosa, Iowa, one of the bone and sinew class, called upon us yesterday in relation to business matters. Before leaving, we asked him how Mr. Lincoln stood in Iowa. 'Stands?' said the old farmer, with glistening eyes and raising his brawny fist, 'Old Abe stands seventeen feet higher in Iowa than any other man in the United States!'"

Lincoln now in the White House would probably be considering that Iowa farmer as more important than the members of Congress. That farmer could understand better than official Washington what John

Bright of the British House of Commons told an American interviewer. Bright refused to worry over reports that Lincoln was too slow, adding, "Mr. Lincoln is like a waiter in a large eating house where all the bells are ringing at once; he cannot serve them all at once, and so some grumblers are to be expected."

Lincoln now would expect, whenever he was decisive, whenever he did something spectacular on a large scale, to be called tyrannical and despotic. Hundreds of speeches and editorials used the word "tyrant" and "despot" for him. Once as he read a sheaf of editorials Henry Ward Beecher had written and published in a religious weekly, the *Independent*, his one comment was, "Is thy servant a dog?"

And when he was not decisive nor spectacular, what were the words for him? He was "slow," "indecisive," "vacillating." He lacked "vigor." A man of "more energy" was wanted. One persisting favorite adjective was "vacillating." When you try to walk a straight line chalked on a floor and you can't stick to the line you are vacillating.

In the spring of '61 he took to himself the powers of a dictator. He started a war without asking Congress, declared a blockade, called for troops to put down an insurrection, lifted for immediate use millions of dollars from the United States Treasury without authorized appropriation by Congress. And his call for Congress to meet and ratify these arbitrary acts of his named July 4th, months ahead, as the date.

When his powers to do these things were bitterly

questioned he asked whether he must stick strictly to the Constitution while trying to save the government of which the Constitution was the written instrument. They were dizzy days and he told his secretary John Hay one day, "My policy is to have no policy."

This same viewpoint stood forth in a letter made public in April of '64 written to a Kentucky man. It staggered some readers in its confession. "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me." What—no policy? Yes, that was what he was saying. Except on the one issue of saving the Union and no extension of slavery, he had no fixed paramount policy. He would have compromised on slavery forty ways for the saving of the Union. Events controlled him. Sometimes he prayed for an event to happen, so he could do what could not be done till that event came.

What would Lincoln do now? Would he find the conflict between invested capital and organized labor as tough as the slavery issue of his own time? As Chief Magistrate of all the people he would hope, of course, to smooth out the differences among honest men, not to mention dealing with those he had in mind when writing: "Actual war coming . . . every foul bird comes abroad and every dirty reptile rises up. These add crime to confusion. Strong measures, deemed indispensable, but harsh at best, such men make worse by maladministration."

His own party then he saw split forty ways on what to do about slavery. The moderates divided into

those who with Lincoln favored the government buying the slaves and setting them free and those who thought this wouldn't work. The radicals divided into the abolitionists who, like Wendell Phillips and Charles Sumner, called for an emancipation proclamation as soon as the war started and those like William Lloyd Garrison and Harriet Beecher Stowe who favored going slower and making sure. There were Douglas Democrats who wanted to save the Union and let slavery alone, many of them splendid fighting men. There were sections and factions always to be considered, as to principles and offices and patronage, and they tore their shirts when they didn't get what they wanted. There were cliques and individuals wanting contracts, subsidies, special favors. Some wanted greenbacks, others "hard money." The tariff, banking, and Pacific Railway blocs never stopped looking toward their particular goals.

Through this chaos of clashing ideas Lincoln had to ride. Every day came pressure and he had to say Yes or No. And in these pressures did he have a choice between right, on the one hand, and wrong, on the other? Hardly. Day after day and hour on hour he had to decide between what was partly right and partly wrong, on the one hand, and what, on the other hand, was partly right and partly wrong. Many a time when making his decision he admitted it was partly wrong but it was the best he could do. He had a word for this. He would point to what he would like to do that would be perfectly right and then show how what

was perfectly right wouldn't work—in the end it would get worse results than another course which he termed "expedient."

The saving of the Union was the only major issue where he held his cause completely just as well as politic and expedient. On the other major issue, slavery, what did he do that was "expedient" rather than right? Look at his Emancipation Proclamation. It says plainly that he issues it because of "military necessity." He means the Union armies will win sooner if the slaves are made free. Of course, as he said later, he believed slavery to be wrong. He believed in freedom for the blacks bought and sold as livestock and assessed on the taxbooks as were cattle and sheep. But he didn't and felt he couldn't say so in the Emancipation Proclamation. There he said they were given freedom "as an act of justice warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity."

Did this mean that he freed all slaves in all slave states? No. In the states named in the Emancipation Proclamation the so-called Border States were left out. In the slave states of Missouri, Kentucky, Delaware, Maryland, were the slaves declared to be free? No. Those states had not seceded, were not "in rebellion," as he phrased it. And did he declare all slaves in the seceded states to be forever free? No, he made exceptions. He named thirteen parishes of the state of Louisiana, including the city of New Orleans, as exceptions. There the slaves were not declared free. Likewise in seven counties and two cities of the state

of Virginia, including the forty-eight slave soil counties of West Virginia, the slaves were not declared free. They were excepted.

Of course, he had reasons, arguments that look good today, for doing what was expedient rather than right. Lincoln now, if alive and effective, would often be doing the expedient thing rather than the right thing. Otherwise he would go down politically and be swept out of use, which didn't happen to Lincoln while he was alive. The mystery of justice tangled in realities stood forth in Horace Mann sniffing to Samuel J. May, "I hate your doctrine that we should think only of the right and not of the expedient," and May sniffing in return, "And I hate your doctrine that we should think of the expedient, and not only of the right."

Not merely day after day but month on month and year after year the two leading and most widely circulated newspapers of the country challenged, attacked, belittled Lincoln's course of action or inaction. These were the New York *Herald*, conservative and hating abolitionists, and the New York *Tribune*, radical and antislavery. And the *Herald* nearly always saw Lincoln going too far while the *Tribune* hardly ever failed to find fault with Lincoln for not going far enough. The *Herald* in early '64 hoped to get Grant nominated for president instead of Lincoln. The *Tribune* named several who would make better candidates than Lincoln and said some other man ought to be nominated if only to respect "the salutary One Term principle."

Also day after day Lincoln was the target of slander, scandal, misrepresentation, vituperation, lies, false rumors, half-truths, insinuations, lampoons, caricatures from a free press that hated him and his ways. They poured it on him. He took it meekly and bowed low before it. He took it with laughter and cheer at times when on the face of it a lie couldn't get by. He writhed and twisted when he knew it harmed his cause and that of the boys who had answered his call to service. That was his mood when in Philadelphia at a Sanitary Fair dedication in April of '64 he said, "It is difficult to say a sensible thing nowadays." So much of what he had been saying was tortured into something else that he didn't mean. A hundred voices and as many journals over and again used the word "imbecile" to describe his administration.

When a military authority, without asking Lincoln about it, shut down a treasonable newspaper with a neurotic editor in Chicago, an editor at a later time declared by a jury to be "mentally unsound," Lincoln said nothing, did nothing. When coolheaded friends of Lincoln in Chicago pleaded with him to revoke the military order and let the Chicago newspaper run its free presses again, Lincoln issued the order so the newspaper was again free to spread sedition and teach treason. When the same military authority arrested an Ohio congressman on charges of giving comfort and aid to the enemy, Lincoln said he would have done it different if he had been asked about it—and then ordered the treason agitator sent to the Union Army

lines, where he was marched on into the enemy lines, "banished" from Ohio and the U.S.A. In each of these actions Lincoln was before and after denounced by his political opposition as "tyrant," "despot," "dictator," "imbecile." When the foremost Democratic party newspaper, the *New York World*, published a bogus and forged defeatist proclamation as signed by the president, Secretary of State William H. Seward said that as a newspaper it had been published "a minute too long." War Secretary Stanton wrote an order for its suppression. Lincoln signed the order. The paper was shut down, couldn't run its presses, couldn't print and sell because of Federal troops in possession of the plant. Then Lincoln issued another order and the *New York World* again printed its papers, packed with denunciations of the president.

Widely published was Lincoln's little query, "Must I shoot a simple-minded soldier boy who deserts and not touch a hair of the wily agitator who induces him to desert?" That is a terrible question. It carries its own answer. It was in the minds of some of the men who joined mobs that wrecked or burned a score of newspaper plants, dailies and weeklies, and came to no punishment from local or federal authorities.

Lincoln now might not be hearing from supporters that he is "slow," "vacillating," and from enemies that he is "imbecile." He might not. And again he might. Human impulses have not changed particularly as between then and now. Certainly the



politicians of the various sections and factions play the game much the same.

An Illinois politician and soldier who had for years watched Lincoln thought the best key to the man and his style as a statesman was in an odd little speech that Lincoln made aimed at this one man, John M. Palmer, a Union Democrat and a brave officer.

Palmer found Lincoln in the hands of the barber, and Lincoln called, "Come in, Palmer, come in. You're home folks. I can shave before you. I couldn't before those others, and I have to do it sometime." They chatted about politics, Palmer finally speaking in a frank and jovial mood. "Mr. Lincoln, if anybody had told me that in a great crisis like this the people were going out to a little one-horse town and pick out a one-horse lawyer for president I wouldn't have believed it." Lincoln whirled in his chair, his face white with lather, a towel under his chin. Palmer at first thought the president was angry. Sweeping the barber away, Lincoln leaned forward, put a hand on Palmer's knee, and said, "Neither would I. But it was a time when a man with a policy would have been fatal to the country. I have never had a policy. I have simply tried to do what seemed best as each day came."

The good woman Ida Tarbell read a thousand books on Lincoln and wrote more books of her own with fresh material about him and after years of studying him she said it is impossible to make either merely a saint or a hero out of him—he was too human, too wide ranging. A New York clergyman of godly

ways, with the ungodly name of Octavius Brooks Frothingham, wrote of how the costumers tried to make clothes and gloves for him but the bones always stuck out and "they could make nothing of him" because "he was a character—not a doll." So while his coffin traveled from Washington to Springfield "the country does not go wild over him; it silently weeps for him; it does not celebrate him as a demigod—it mourns for him as a friend. It gives him no noisy place in the hall of the heroes—it gives him a dear and still one in the chamber of the heart. Ordinary human nature was honored in him, and so ordinary human nature weeps for him."

The words "responsible" and "responsibility" stick out from many of his letters. And he liked the word "thorough." He thought freedom worth men's dying for but he would like it that freemen could understand their freedom would be safer if they felt responsible about it and could be thorough in their work as freemen.

Often amid chaos and howls of shame and guilt he sat cool as death writing memoranda on what it was immediately possible to do. Or again, as when news came of a valued friend killed in combat, the tears ran down his face and after the slaughters of two lost battles he was in grief near to agony. In one lull after a disaster he was full of jokes and told one fool story after another till he heard a question why he could be so lightminded, when he answered, "My God, man, don't you see that if I didn't laugh I would have to

cry?" His personality held a wide range of the tragic and the comic. Perhaps democracy can best survive where men know the right moments for complete and solemn reverence or the nonsense that nourishes and the laughter that rests and may even heal.

The foremost humorists, the three leading comics of his time, Artemus Ward, Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby, Orpheus C. Kerr, were with him. They loved him. They enjoyed poking fun at him and kicking his dignity in the slats, sneaking in sidewise their affection and admiration for him. His opposition tried for it but could never come through with effective ridicule that had people laughing at the first authentic humorist to occupy the White House.

Lincoln now laughs. The ghost of his laughter is part of our inheritance. The people, who stood with him when the politicians in Washington wondered what was the matter with their constituents, understood he was laughing their own corn-on-the-cob mirth that helps when things go bad sometimes. Not until peace came did he allow himself to smile for a photographer. And behind the smile was a haggard weariness.

There were many fool talkers and writers in Lincoln's generation. They let themselves go. They had a good time and indulged their passions and their hate. Today their words look pathetic or ridiculous. We may read the *Congressional Globe* of the 1860's with amazement at how large a majority of congressmen did not know the history in the making before their own eyes. We feel sorry they had such loose mouths and so

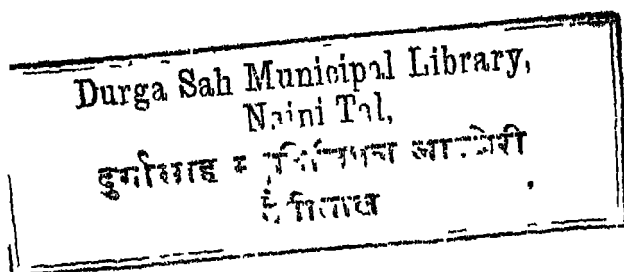
little care and anxiety as to how their utterance would look in the future.

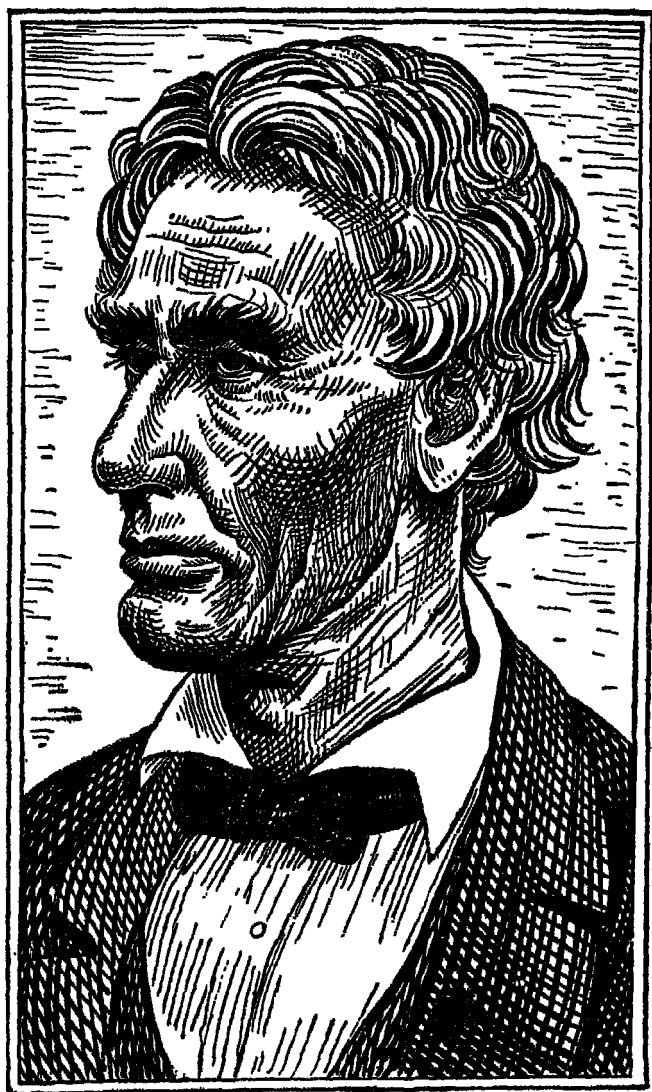
Lincoln was one of the few who had precisely and deeply that care and anxiety about what he said or wrote. He could be musical of speech but there are times when he hedges and cribs and confines what he is saying till it seems crabbed and clumsy. What is he doing? He is circumscribing the area where he says he knows something for sure. He is taking care to mislead no one. So the people over the States trusted him when the Senate and the House and the *New York Herald* and the *New York Tribune* and the *London Times* didn't. He foreshadowed something. The people took him as a new figure of hope for them. This hope ranged around wider freedom, political and economic, for the common man. It might be long in coming. But Lincoln held the lights and the high torch for it.

The people of this and many other countries take Lincoln now for their own. He belongs to them. To many the word "freedom" or the word "democracy" is hard to get at. And the Constitution—Sure, we're for the Constitution, though we're not sure what it means and we have even heard of lawyers who don't know what the Constitution means and they prove it by arguing and disputing about what it means.

But Lincoln—yes—he stands for decency, honest dealing, plain talk, and funny stories. Look where he came from—don't he know all us strugglers and wasn't he a kind of a tough struggler all his life right up to the finish?

Something like that you can hear in any near-by neighborhood—and across the seas in far continents. Millions there are who take Lincoln as a personal treasure. He had something they would like to see spread everywhere over the world. Democracy? We can't say exactly what it is, but he had it. In his blood and bones he carried it. In the breath of his speeches and writings it is there. Popular government? Republican institutions? Government where the people have he say-so, one way or another telling their rulers what they want? He had the idea. It's there in the lights and shadows of his personality, a mystery that can be lived but never fully spoken in words. A *London Spectator* writer tried to analyze Lincoln's message to Congress in December of 1862, found it having a 'mystical dreaminess," and "The thoughts of the man are too big for his mouth."







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